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ABSTRACT

Intended for writing teachers and administrators of writing programs, this handbook is both an information source and a model for a staff development workshop on writing assessment. Section I reviews the history of the New Jersey Statewide Writing Test, while Section II describes the test format, content, and reporting procedures. After an evaluation of holistic scoring in Sections III and IV, Section V suggests ways of applying test results to strengthen student writing. The final two sections discuss curriculum changes, materials, and strategies to improve writing instruction. The entire handbook is organized around a sample agenda for a writing assessment workshop. Appendixes include descriptions of successful writing programs, sample writing topics, a list of publishers welcoming student writing, and information on ERIC documents on writing instruction. (MM)

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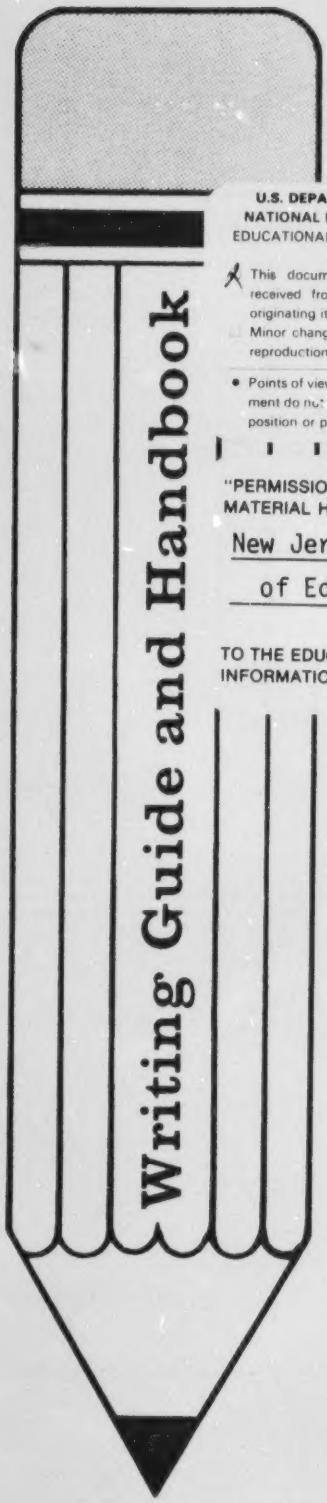

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New Jersey Statewide Writing Assessment Program

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THE NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM STAFF DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND REFERENCE HANDBOOK

Saul Cooperman
Commissioner of Education

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:

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Diane S. Braungart

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Focus and Purpose of the Handbook..... 1
Using the Handbook: Staff Development Workshop..... 2

Sample Workshop Agenda..... 3- 4

SECTION I..... 5- 7

A Review of the History of the New Jersey Statewide Writing Test 6
A Review of the Purpose of Writing Assessment..... 6- 7

SECTION II..... 8-11

Test Specifics..... 9
Test Format and Content..... 9
Test Scoring..... 10
Features of the Writing Assessment Program..... 10-11
Test Reporting..... 11

SECTION III..... 12-15

What is Holistic Scoring?..... 13-14
Rationale Underlying Holistic Scoring..... 14
The Advantages and Disadvantages of Holistic Scoring..... 14-15

SECTION IV..... 16-24

Introduction..... 17
When You're Ready to Score..... 17
Holistic Scoring: A Sample Test Item..... 17
Range-finders for a Sample Item..... 18
Discussion of Range-finders..... 18-19
Holistic Scoring Practice..... 19-20
Suggested Scores and Rationales..... 21-22
"Students Learn by Doing Holistic Scoring"..... 23-24

SECTION V..... 25-34

Using Writing Tests and Test Results in the Classroom..... 26
Applying Writing Test Skill Clusters to Instruction..... 27-29
Sager Writing Scale..... 30
Diederich Model..... 31
Improving Composition - Transferring Specific Grammar Skills
to Writing..... 32-34

SECTION VI..... 35-37

We Want to Improve Writing Instruction, What Can We Do?..... 36-37

SECTION VII..... 38-44

Considering Composition..... 39-40

.Overall Program Characteristics..... 39
.Program Materials..... 39-40
.Instructional Practices..... 40

Writing Instruction - Check-up on Instructional Practices..... 41-44

.Classroom Routines..... 41
.Pupil Participation..... 41
.Teaching Procedures..... 42

Use of Data..... 42-44

APPENDIX A..... 45-65

1982-1983 Writing Test Development Committee..... 46
Writing Skill Arrays and Curriculum Benchmarks..... 47-65

APPENDIX B..... 66-67

Successful Ingredients of Effective Writing Programs..... 67

.National Humanities Symposium
.Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

APPENDIX C..... 68-70

Validated Writing Programs that Work..... 69

.Individualized Language Arts (I.L.A.), Weehawkin..... 69
.Project WRITE, Glassboro..... 69
.READ-WRITE, Newark..... 69-70
.New Jersey Writing Project, South Brunswick..... 70
.Writing Into Reading, West Windsor-Plainsboro..... 70
.Ferguson-Florissant Writing Project, Ferguson, Missouri..... 70

APPENDIX D..... 71-73

.Writing Topics: Source..... 72
.Examples of Prompts (Topics)..... 72-73

APPENDIX E..... 74-76

Resource: Presenters/Speakers..... 75-76

APPENDIX F..... 77-83

Resource: Organizations and Materials..... 78-83

APPENDIX G..... 84-104

Resource: Publications..... 85-104

APPENDIX H..... 105-107

Resource: Publishers That Welcome Student's Writing..... 106-107

APPENDIX I..... 108-112

Resource: Especially for Teachers ERIC Documents on the Teaching of Writing 1966-1981

Table of Contents..... 110-111

Sample Resume Entry..... 112

APPENDIX J..... 113-114

Resource: Teacher-Resource Books for the Improvement and Implementation of Creative Writing Programs..... 114

APPENDIX K..... 115-122

Articles that Stimulate Discussion

."Making the Pen Mightier"..... 116-119
."Don't Teach Rules, Teach Writing"..... 120
."Why Write"..... 121-122

APPENDIX L..... 123-127

Suggestions For Parents: "How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer"..... 124-127

APPENDIX M..... 128-131

"Author's Quips on Writing"..... 129-131

Message to the Reader..... 132

FOCUS & PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

"The great unknown to anyone outside the classroom environment is the knowledge of the individual child with whom the teacher works."

Dr. Paul S. Anderson
San Diego State University

This handbook is directed to those educators who have responsibility for teaching writing skills or supervising and administering writing programs. The handbook can be used as an information source for supplementing personal knowledge and background on writing assessment; or as the basis for a staff development workshop on writing assessment in the local education agencies.

This document presents the specifics of New Jersey Writing Assessment from the perspective of its history, development, test content and format. In addition, procedural suggestions have been presented to guide districts in the development and definition of their local writing programs. Districts should supplement the ideas and procedures presented with other suggested exercises and activities. We are eager to make this handbook as timely and useful a resource as possible.

USING THE HANDBOOK: STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

In developing this handbook, materials were provided for individual as well as staff development use.

Following is a sample staff development workshop agenda that exhibits flexibility in meeting the needs of local education agencies. It is not necessary to follow the agenda exactly; however, a review of the agenda will provide an estimate of time required for suggested workshop activities. Group size, topics, discussion and questions and allotted breaks will affect the estimates of time provided.

Materials in the handbook correspond to the sample workshop agenda. A variety of "resources" are provided so that local educational agencies with diverse needs and means can choose appropriate and feasible activities. Instructions and suggestions for use of the materials are included in the agenda and introduction to each part of the handbook.

SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA

Introductory Comments — 15 minutes
- Overview of the Workshop
- Review of the History of the New Jersey Writing Assessment Program
- Review of the Purpose of Writing Assessment
- Discussion and Questions
- (Handout: Section I of Handbook - pages 5-7)

Description of the New Jersey Statewide Writing Test — 30 minutes
- Test Specifics
- Test Format and Content
- Test Scoring
- Features of the Writing Assessment Program
- Test Reporting
- Discussion and Questions
- (Handout: Section II of Handbook - pages 8-11)

An Overview of the Holistic Scoring Process — 15 minutes
- Definition and Description
- Rationale Underlying Holistic Scoring
- Advantages and Disadvantages of Holistic Scoring
- Discussion and Questions
- (Handout: Section III of Handbook - pages 12-15)

Holistic Scoring Participation (Optional) — 30 minutes
- Scoring a Sample Item: A Hypothetical Situation
- "Students Learn by Doing Holistic Scoring" - John O. White
- (Handout: Section IV, Optional - pages 16-24)

Using Writing Tests and Test Results in the Classroom — 30 minutes
- Applying the Test Skill Clusters to Instruction
- Small Group Discussion
  - (Have educators break up into groups of six or eight to generate lists of additional instructional approaches)
- Improving Composition
- (Handout: Section V of Handbook - pages 25-34)

Small Group Reports and General Discussion — 30 minutes
- We Want to Improve Writing Instruction - What Can We Do?
  - (Reporters from each group could share the list of generated uses; leader might create a written list of all unique ideas to be mailed to participants following the workshop)
- (Handout: Section VI of Handbook - pages 35-37)

Evaluating a Writing Program — 15 minutes
- A Checklist for Teachers and Administrators
- Discussion and Questions
- (Handout: Section VII of Handbook - pages 38-44)

District Participation and Presentations — 60 minutes
(Identify districts who could share their experiences on the following)
Student Selection Process
Student Programming - Matching Students Needs
Student Feedback - Recognition and Reward
Discussion and Questions

Review of Appendix: — 15 minutes
(A) Writing Test Format and Specifications
1982-1983 Test Development Committee Members
(B) Successful Ingredients of Effective Writing Programs
.National Humanities Symposium
.Association for Curriculum Development
(C) Validated Writing Programs That Work
(D) Writing Topics:
. Source
. Examples of Prompts (Topics)
(E) Resource: Presenters/Speakers
(F) Resource: Organizations and Materials
(G) Resource: Publications
(H) Resource: Publishers that Welcome Student's Writing
(I) Resource: Especially for Teachers: ERIC Documents on the Teaching of Writing 1966-1981. Table of Contents. (To order, see ERIC, Appendix F above)
(J) Resource: References for Creative Writing
(K) Articles that Stimulate Small Group Interaction and General Discussion:
."Making the Pen Mightier", Barry K. Beyer
."Don't Teach Rules, Teach Writing", Robert Anderson
."Why Write", Donald Graves
(L) Suggestions For Parents: "How to Help Your Child To Become a Better Writer"
(M) Author's Quips on Writing

SECTION I

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE WRITING TEST

A REVIEW OF THE PURPOSE OF WRITING ASSESSMENT

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE WRITING TEST

In 1979, Senate Bill 1154 was signed into law as Chapter 241, Laws of 1979. This law established statewide requirements for high school graduation, one of which specified that students who will graduate beginning in 1985 must pass state tests in reading, computation and writing in grade nine. The reading and computation tests were administered in March 1982, but the writing test was not implemented due to budgetary constraints.

On August 6, 1982, New Jersey Education Commissioner Saul Cooperman announced that the writing test would be administered for the first time in March 1983. The reading and computation tests would continue to be administered to ninth grade students, assessing the same skills identified in 1978.

For 1982-1983, passing the reading and computation tests would continue to be required for high school graduation, but not so with the writing test. A Florida court ruling on the case of Debra P. vs. Turlington required students to be given adequate time and opportunity to prepare for a test which would be a criterion for graduation. This ruling gave impetus to New Jersey's decision to give local districts more time to prepare and implement a writing curriculum, and to develop programs to meet individual student needs.

On January 5, 1983 the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted the commissioner's proposal for a new statewide testing system. The new test, which will be developed and introduced during the 1983-1984 school year will <u>not</u> be used as a high school graduation requirement until the spring of 1985-1986. The <u>ninth grade</u> class of 1985-1986 will be the first class required to pass the <u>new</u> test - reading, mathematics and writing as one of the requirements for graduation. Until 1985-1986 the MBS test will continue to be the required graduation test. This decision gives districts time to modify instructional programs and allow students to be instructed in the new skill arrays. The new test will measure skills that will be more rigorous than those skills previously assessed.

<u>NOTE</u>:

"Skill Area" or "Specification" Subcommittees have recently completed reviewing the 1978 (reading and mathematics) and 1982-1983 (writing) skill areas to make them more appropriate for today's needs. The skills placed in survey format will be analyzed and reported at the 1983 June State Board meeting. Approval of the more rigorous skill arrays will result in the release of the skills to local educational agencies for curriculum development and inclusion at the local level.(See Appendix A)

A REVIEW OF THE PURPOSE OF WRITING ASSESSMENT

The mark of an educated and sophisticated society is reflected in the ability of its citizens to write well; therefore writing is as important as reading and mathematics and is another step toward excellence.

Learning to write competently is an on-going process. The teaching of the skills of composition (writing) begins with oral composition in kindergarten and continues with oral and written composition through all the grades, and beyond. Teaching the skills necessary for students to succeed in the writing assessment test is only a part, although an important part, of a good writing program. Teaching these skills cannot be the responsibility of a single teacher at any one grade level, but a responsibility of a good writing program and the entire instructional staff as a whole. A good program has a well-thought-out sequence from grade to grade and is coordinated within grades. Achieving competency in writing requires a district-wide effort at every grade level and across all disciplines.

Statewide writing assessment can assist educators at both state and district levels by identifying instructional goals as well as learning effectiveness. Assessment results used as diagnostic data can help to individualize instruction, monitor students' level of development, and provide a basis for communication with parents or guardians. A second use for such assessment tools is to place students in appropriate courses along the continuum of writing skills development. The use of tests in this manner will provide for improved educational decision-making at state and local levels.

SECTION II

.TEST SPECIFICS
.TEST FORMAT AND CONTENT
.TEST SCORING
.FEATURES OF THE WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
.TEST REPORTING

TEST SPECIFICS

WHO IS TESTED: Ninth Grade Students

Limited English-speaking students (LE) and students classified as handicapped will follow the same standards and provisions as those established for test year 1981-1982.

WHEN: Writing, Reading and Mathematics skills will be assessed annually each spring. The three statewide tests will occur on successive days during a designated week in the month of March.

These dates take into account the administration of both the MBS test (reading and mathematics) and the new test (reading, writing, and mathematics) to grade nine students in 1984, 1985 and 1986, and the appropriate make-up periods for both tests. The testing dates are:

1984	New Test	March 6, 7, 8
	Make-up	March 12-23
	MBS	March 27, 28
	Make-up	April 2-13
1985	New Test	March 5, 6, 7
	Make-up	March 11 - 22
	MBS	March 26, 27
	Make-up	*April 1-19

*(Three calendar weeks to account for spring vacation)

1986	New Test	March 4, 5, 6
	Make up	March 10-21
	MBS (grades 10, 11, 12)	March 4, 5

WHERE & HOW: The test setting will require the same standards as those established for conducting previous New Jersey Statewide tests.

TEST FORMAT AND CONTENT

The ninth grade writing test will consist of two parts, a possible 40 to 60 minute multiple choice section and a 30-minute essay. The possible 100 question multiple choice section will cover three clusters - Sentence Structure, Organization of Ideas, and Editing. In the essay section a time allowance is provided so that students may participate in prewriting, writing, and editing of their essay.

In recognition of the importance of testing writing skills by actually having students write, the essay portion of the test will comprise 60 percent of the total writing score while the multiple choice section will be weighted at 40 percent of the total.

TEST SCORING

The multiple choice section of the statewide writing test will be computer scored. The essay portion of the test will be hand-scored by qualified persons trained to use a holistic procedure.

Approximately 230 teachers from New Jersey schools and colleges will be trained to score the essays. They will be professionals who are aware of the quality of writing that can be expected from students at this level and are in agreement as to that which constitutes good writing. It is our intention that once these people are trained, they can return to their institutions to train others in the procedures of holistic scoring.

The holistic procedure is a rapid and efficient scoring process that produces agreement on what constitutes a relatively fine and a relatively poor essay. Each essay will receive two readings and two separate scores. Because of a sophisticated coding system, the second reader will have no idea of the first reader's score, but each paper will be evaluated on the same principle as every other: by the trained scorer's overall impression of that paper's relative position among all the other ninth grade student papers written during the statewide test. A six-point scale will be employed for this evaluation process, with a score of 1 representing the lowest level of accomplishment; a score of 6, the highest. However, because of the logistical demands of such a large and thorough reading (approximately 100,000 written responses), the results of the essay portion will not be available until the autumn of 1983. Beginning 1984, student writing samples will be scored on successive weekends following the test make-up period.

FEATURES OF THE WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

In the spring of 1978, 24 writing experts from local districts and New Jersey colleges and universities were convened to identify a preliminary list of writing skills. These skills identified by the committee then were placed in survey format and distributed to educators and business people throughout the state for comments and verification. In addition, all school board members and 250 high school seniors from around the state were asked to respond to the survey. The Writing Test Development Committee analyzed the survey data and, based on the survey responses, identified the final list of ninth grade writing specifications.

In addition to the Writing Specification Committee, the test development process requires the involvement of other external committees. These committees are active participants and are primarily responsible for the test development process each year.

Test Development Committee (TDC)

The membership is composed of language arts and writing specialists from throughout the state as well as representatives from higher education, boards of education and other appropriate constituencies. Their task is to examine each test item and determine whether or not the item measures the objective for which it is identified and if it is properly constructed.

Minority Advisory Committee (MAC)

This committee is charged with the task of eliminating, or minimizing, cultural, linguistic and gender biases from the test specification and test items.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee, composed of experts in the field of testing, measurement, statistics, language arts and mathematics, is charged with assuring that the tests meet all technical standards.

This group convenes annually to review all aspects of the program in accordance with technical standards, to review the field test data and to establish procedures for the other committees to use in the test development process.

Once the test is developed and received by all the committees, it is field tested in October to tenth grade students. Following the field test, the Test Development Committee and the Minority Advisory Committee meet to review the field test results and make whatever changes are needed.

Test Development Subcommittees

There are two other committees, the "Specification" and "Publication" Subcommittees. These two committees work closely with the department in identifying the issues and needs of educators in terms of writing as well as developing products that focus on communicating information to parents and educators. The "Skill Area" or "Specification" Subcommittee is reviewing the 1978 specifications to make them more appropriate for today's needs. The results of the preliminary skills placed in survey format will be analyzed and reported at the 1983 June State Board meeting. Approval of the more rigorous skill arrays will result in the release of the skills to local educational agencies for curriculum development and inclusion at the local level. The "Publication" Subcommittee has prepared a brochure about the Ninth Grade Statewide Writing Test for parents/guardians. The booklet entitled Parent's Guide was delivered to districts for distribution to parents during the first week of March 1983. In addition, an informative booklet on "Holistic Scoring," "Developing Student's Writing Skills" and "Organizing Writing Programs" will be developed and incorporated within the District Guidelines booklet.

TEST REPORTING

Each of the sections of the writing test will be weighted according to its importance. The multiple choice section is weighted as 40 percent and the essay section is weighted as 60 percent. A total score will be reported as well as sub-scores for the multiple choice and essay portion of the test.

School district personnel will receive the following reports indicating responses to each item, the sub-part and total scores:

Student Roster
District Roster Summary Report
Individual Student Report
Student Item Response Roster
Class Summary Report
School Summary Report
District Summary Report

SECTION III

.WHAT IS HOLISTIC SCORING?
.RATIONALE UNDERLYING HOLISTIC SCORING
.ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF HOLISTIC SCORING

WHAT IS "HOLISTIC" SCORING?

Since the essay is a direct measure of a student's writing ability, the standards for the scoring session are based upon the consensus of the readers who score papers. Using the principles of holistic scoring pioneered by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), scoring the New Jersey Statewide Writing Test will employ procedures modeled after those used by the Department of Higher Education for the scoring of the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test.

Holistic scoring involves reading essay papers for an overall or "whole" impression of the papers by at least two readers. The basic premise of holistic scoring is that if scorers read each paper as a whole, they are better able to judge the competence of the writer in relationship to other writers responding to the same topic. While individual components such as organization, word use, grammar and style can--and will--affect a reader's overall response, none of these individual factors will be considered in isolation. Rather, the <u>total</u> impression the reader forms of a paper will determine that paper's relative relationship to all the other papers read by the same reader.

The papers will be rated on a six-point scoring scale. An even-numbered scale has been selected because it eliminates the chance for borderline papers to be placed at a "mid-point" and allows for finer distinction among papers. Essays with scores that differ by three points--or more--are read by a third reader, the chief or assistant chief readers. (Educators selected for their expertise and qualifications in the field of writing assessment.) The student's score is the sum of the two readers' ratings.

Prior to actual scoring, the chief reader, assistant chief reader and table leaders review a random sampling of the papers to be scored in order to identify "range-finders." These are papers considered representative of all the papers at a given scoring level (1 to 6). The "range-finder" papers, therefore, are "typical" of papers at a given level and are assigned a score agreed upon by all readers. There is no pre-conceived set of criteria in identifying the range-finders. The score reflects a degree of writing ability based upon the entire group of essays being scored at that time. The consistency between raters and among scores by individual raters is an important aspect of holistic scoring. This level of rater agreement and score consistency is maintained by the Chief Reader for the duration of the holistic scoring session. The Chief Reader uses "range-finder" papers every 20-30 minutes to assure that the reading and scoring of individual essays are based on the individual student's writing ability in relationship to the other papers produced during the same test.

Holistic scoring is a rapid and efficient scoring process that produces agreement on what constitutes a relatively fine and a relatively poor paper. Depending upon the length of the 20-minute sample, experienced readers can score 30 to 40 papers an hour. This scoring method does not yield diagnostic information on a student's writing strengths and weaknesses. It does, however, provide a reliable and consistent method of assessing overall proficiency levels on a given writing sample.

A prerequisite exercised in holistic scoring of individual student papers is anonymity. The anonymity of the writer and the scorer is maintained at all times. The student's privacy is honored as well as their writing which is observed and read with respect by the individual readers.

RATIONALE UNDERLYING HOLISTIC SCORING

The major assumption upon which holistic scoring is based is that "a piece of writing communicates a whole message with a particular tone to a known audience for some purpose" (Cooper, Charles R. 1977, p. 3). The quality of the piece should therefore be judged on its over-all success as a whole presentation, rather than on the accuracy of its component parts. In other words, the "whole" of a piece of writing is assumed to be greater than the sum of its parts.

Contributing to the rationale underlying holistic scoring is evidence that: (1) no aspect of writing skills can really be judged independently, (2) teachers can recognize and agree upon good writing when they see it, regardless of how they describe writing ability, and (3) teachers will rank pieces of writing in much the same way notwithstanding any discrepant views they might hold about how particular components of writing should be weighted.

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF HOLISTIC SCORING

While no single scoring method can be considered free from imperfections, some of the marked advantages of the holistic method are these.

- It permits the scoring of a large number of essays or writing samples in a relatively short period of time.
- It emphasizes what is right rather than what is wrong with a piece of writing.
- It can facilitate communication among teachers about the teaching and assessment of writing.
- It identifies very rapidly those students in need of some kind of additional instruction in writing.
- Through participation in holistic scoring workshops, teachers are exposed to a wider range of writing abilities than they might ordinarily encounter in a typical class.
- Holistic scoring is adaptable to regular evaluation in the classroom. Furthermore, it involves so little time on the part of teachers that it allows them to give students more practice in writing.

Of course, as we have suggested, the listing of these advantages is in no way meant to imply that the holistic method is exempt from certain liabilities. For one thing, information about a student's specific writing strengths or weaknesses will not be readily available. The method is intended as a more global, perhaps screening, assessment device. Educators need to apply other assessment techniques to the process of examining individual student's writing

to obtain detailed diagnostic information. (That, indeed, is one of the primary reasons for including a multiple-choice section as part of the entire exam.) But the holistic scoring process remains the single most useful and reliable tool for the fair assessment of a large number of writing samples.

Source:

Cooper, Charles R., and Lee Odell, Eds.: Evaluating Writing. National Council of Teachers of English Publication; Urbana, Illinois, 1977.

Test Contractor: National Evaluation Systems
Amherst, Massachusetts

Chief Readers: Dr. William Walling, Professor
Rutgers - The State University
New Brunswick

Mr. Richard Schwartz, Director
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Camden County College

SECTION IV (OPTIONAL)

.INTRODUCTION
.WHEN YOU'RE READY TO SCORE
.HOLISTIC SCORING: A SAMPLE TEST ITEM
.RANGE-FINDERS FOR A SAMPLE ITEM
.DISCUSSION OF RANGE-FINDERS
.HOLISTIC SCORING PRACTICE
.SUGGESTED SCORES AND RATIONALES
."STUDENTS LEARN BY DOING HOLISTIC SCORING"

INTRODUCTION

The materials in this section familiarize users with scoring procedures, not to train them as professional raters. Participation in actual holistic scoring sessions require that the scorers must be carefully trained to use holistic scoring in order for its results to be reliable and useful.

The student papers used in this handbook are typed for the convenience of the user. The ability to cope with the variable of handwriting over and above learning to apply scoring procedures is a critical element of the professional training of scorers.

A PERSON EXPERIENCED IN HOLISTIC SCORING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A PRESENTER AT AN IN-SERVICE WORKSHOP ON THIS SECTION.

HOLISTIC SCORING: HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION, INTRODUCTION, HOW TO SCORE, SAMPLE ITEM, RANGE-FINDERS, PRACTICE, SCORES AND RATIONALES

The following document received permission for replication from the Center for Performance Assessment, NWREL, and NIE; handbook entitled: Classroom Applications of Writing Assessment

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO SCORE

To begin, read Item #1 through carefully. Then study each range-finder, along with the scoring rationales provided in the subsequent discussion. When you are ready, turn the page to score papers A through E.

HOLISTIC SCORING: SAMPLE TEST ITEM

Following is a sample test item that might be given to a group of students to measure general writing proficiency. You can assume that students would have as much time as they needed to respond, and would be allowed to make corrections on their papers if they wished. Also assume that instructions would be given orally as well as in writing.

SAMPLE ITEM

Toby loved to hike in the woods. One day when he was hiking, he found a bird with an injured wing. Toby took the bird home, set his wing, and took care of him. He named the bird Mike. Soon Mike got better, and he could have flown away, but Toby kept him in a small cage. Toby knew the bird was ready to be free, but he liked Mike so much he decided to keep him as a pet.

Do you think Toby made the right decision? Write your answer on this page. State clearly whether you think it was a good idea for Toby to keep Mike. Then explain your reasons as completely as you can.

RANGE-FINDERS FOR SAMPLE ITEM

Level 4 Range-finder: *Toby has definitely not made the right decision. Unless we all protect our wildlife, generations to come will have no wild birds and animals to enjoy. Toby meant well in fixing the bird's broken wing. But he went too far in trying to turn a wild creature into a domestic pet. But it is selfish to keep a wild bird confined just for your own pleasure. A pet may bring one person pleasure, but a wild creater can bring pleasure to everyone who sees and enjoys it. I believe Toby should set Mike free.

Level 3 Range-finder: In my judgement, Toby has made a poor decision. Wild birds are not pets and are not meant to be pets. It is easy to see how Toby would get to like the bird after caring for it and helping it to get well. That does not give him the right to keep this bird. Mike was a wild thing and with the right to remain free. Even things as small birds have rights and feelings. Toby did a good thing to help the bird, but once Mike was well Toby should let him go.

Level 2 Range-finder: Here is a hard choice. For if a person loves his pet it is hard to let the pet go. Toby loves Mike and he is the one who found him. So maybe if the bird is well and then he made him well it is all right to keep him for a while. But he should build a bigger cage for Mike so he will not get cramped and be sure to feed him the right things. Then if Mike stays happy and stays there of his own free will I say sure its OK to keep him for a while (but Mike is not the best name for a bird.)

Level 1 Range-finder: No. Birds do not make good pets I think. Soon Mike could get sick and die, then Toby will be sorry. A dog lives longer than birds and gives better company so that is what Toby should do.

DISCUSSION OF RANGE-FINDERS

NOTE: You may find it helpful at this point to remove the four range finders from your handbook so that you can keep them in front of you for handy reference.

To better understand what's behind these ratings, let's take a closer look at a few of the strengths and weaknesses of each range finder paper. We'll begin this time at the low end of the scale, with the level 1 range-finder.

Level 1 Range-finder: Even a cursory reading reveals faulty spelling and punctuation. But there are more serious problems: weak sentence structure, faulty shift in mood (could to will), vague pronoun reference ("that is what Toby should do"). Moreover, the response addresses the issue only briefly, then switches topics; the question is whether Toby made a sound decision, not whether birds make good pets. Brevity per se is not a fault; in this instance, however, the response is not concise, but rather lacking in content.

Level 2 Range-finder: The opening sentence is weak; it offers a vague reference rather than the strong statement of position called for. The final sentence contains minor punctuation errors. The writer waffles a bit ("maybe...it is all right to keep him for a while"), but finally concludes that Toby's choice is "OK," and says so with reasonable clarity. The

reference to building a bigger cage hedges the issue a bit, but does show somewhat more thought than the writer of paper #1 has given the topic. This is better than a 1 paper because the writer has made a clear attempt to be responsive, but the paper still lacks direction, style, and sense of control.

Level 3 Range-finder: Paper #3 offers an adequate, thought not particularly imaginative response. The paper starts out strong, but is weakened by redundancy and limited reasoning: that is, the writer cannot progress beyond the logic that Mike should be set free because wild creatures should be free (a circular argument). On the positive side, the sentence structure is fair, aside from a troublesome shift in tense in the last sentence. Word choice is not striking, but it does the job. The writer displays fair control of thought and language. The style is a little flat, but the paper has a central theme and gets the point across clearly, if not concisely.

Level 4 Range-finder: This writer responds directly and fully to the issue. The opening sentence clarifies a position that never wavers throughout the paragraph. Moreover, the writer provides sound reasoning to back up the stated position (i.e., protection of wildlife), and expands this thinking to demonstrate some awareness of larger implications ("What if everyone did what Toby has done?"). The result is a clear, thoughtful, well handled piece, free of redundancy. Word choice is good, sentence structure sound.

SUMMARY

The preceding discussion illustrates what might occur to a rater in assigning scores. Additional strengths and weaknesses may have occured to you in reading through the range finders. Rating papers is a complex task. Each paper is unique; moreover, each rater has his or her own biases (e.g., one attends closely to mechanics, another to style, and so on). The purpose of scoring practice is to minimize those biases so that raters can come as close as possible to agreement in assigning scores.

HOLISTIC SCORING PRACTICE (PAPERS A-E)

The following includes five papers, A through E. Score each paper holistically on a 4-point scale, referring often to the range-finders provided for guidance. You are encouraged to avoid making editorial marks on the papers, and to score papers quickly, trusting your impressions.

Following the five student papers, the author presents suggested scores for each paper and a rationale for each score assigned. After scoring, compare your own reasoning with that of the author to determine extent of agreement. DO NOT turn to the Rationale section until you have scored ALL FIVE PAPERS, A through E.

NOTE: If for any reason you think you may wish to reuse these materials, or share them with a colleague, we suggest you make copies of student responses before scoring.

Sample Scoring Exercises (A-E)

Enter your score in the blank provided.

PAPER A SCORE:_____

We should try to see things from Toby's side. I mean, it isn't every day that you get a chance to study nature up close. Now Toby has found this wild bird and he has a chance to study it and observe it. Maybe it is not the best thing to happen for a bird to be kept in a cage, but how else is he going to learn from it. After a while, he can let the bird go.

PAPER B SCORE:_____

I am sorry to say it but Mike has made a poor decision. Wild birds do not live long in captivity, as a rule. They do not receive the right food or enough exercise to keep their wings strong. What can Mike know about fixing a broken wing? Due to his carelessness, Toby may never fly again. He should have taken the bird to a qualified doctor so he could be properly treated and then released.

PAPER C SCORE:_____

Here is what I would do. Take the bird to the zoo and there let it get fixed up. So then it would be better then the zoo could keep the bird.

PAPER D SCORE:_____

Toby faces a dilemma. If he keeps the bird, he is depriving a wild creature of its freedom. If he lets the bird go, he is taking a chance that the bird will no longer be able to care for itself in the wild. Once tamed, a wild creature often becomes dependent. Toby should release the bird, but watch him carefully for several days to be sure he can care for himself. Then he will know he has made the right decision. His decision to keep the bird as a pet is not a responsible one and I'm sure that when he reconsiders he will change his mind.

PAPER E SCORE:_____

Keeping wild birds in captivity is illegal. Therefore, Toby made the wrong decision.

PLEASE TURN THIS PAGE FOR SUGGESTED SCORES AND RATIONALES.

UNIT 1: SUGGESTED SCORES AND RATIONALES (PAPER A-E)

PAPER A Suggested Score: 2

Rationale: With the first two sentences, this paper looked like a 3. The writer hit on a fresh idea: keeping the bird for observation. However, the idea is never developed. In addition, the writer never clearly states a position with regard to Toby's decision, though we can infer he is in favor of Toby's keeping the bird until the last sentence, which weakens even that implied position. Mechanics and sentence structure are reasonably sound. Vocabularly is adequate, though not excellent.

Did you agree with the author's rating? Remember that in holistic scoring, a 1-point discrepancy is generally considered "agreement." This is easy to understand when one realizes that a paper at the upper end of, say, the 2-point range is actually closer to a low 3 than to a low 2. There is space below for you to note your aggreement/disagreement and any comments you may have. These notes may be of value to you later in constructing classroom exercises/ discussions.

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Comments:

PAPER B Suggested Score: 3

Rationale: Here is a good example of a borderline paper that will probably receive some 4s. The language is clear and crisp, the mechanics sound, the vocabulary above average. What holds this paper back is a certain choppiness; it has the tone of a "short answer" about it. Ideas are tossed out rapidfire with little development, and the piece ends abruptly. At the same time, B's position is unequivocal; there is no hedging, no hesitation. Notice that B has transposed the names Mike and Toby, but this is more properly a reading problem than a writing problem.

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Comments:

PAPER C Suggested Score: 1

Rationale: C wants to avoid the whole issue and does so by neatly depositing the bird at the zoo. That might be a workable solution except that the question is not "What would you do?" but "Did Toby make the right decision?" The response is too brief, poorly developed, and off the mark. C's sentence structure is only fair, vocabularly and word choice minimally adequate to answer the item. There is no fluidity, no sense of control. A slight change - suggesting that Toby take the bird to the zoo - might have earned this paper a 2.

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Comments:

PAPER D Suggested Score: 4

Rationale: D shows greater insight than the other papers examined thus far, presenting two sides to the issue, then proposing a resolution that clarifies the primary position of the paper (i.e., "Toby should release the bird..."). The paper has good continuity; ideas seem to build on one another in a logical manner and transitions are smooth. (Compare Paper B.) This writer is clearly in control of the topic.

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Comments:

PAPER E Suggested Score: 2/3

Rationale: This paper is difficult to score. On the one hand, writer E, based on the scant evidence available, is a skillful writer. E addresses the problem directly, albeit briefly, and meets the barebones requirements of the task: taking a stand and providing a reason for that stand. On the other hand, there is no development, no evidence of reasoning, no personal involvement with the topic. This response goes beyond concise; it's terse - almost to the point of sounding flip. It's tempting to allow the purpose of testing to influence the score in a case like this. For example, if the purpose were to see how well a given group of students could write (i.e., as a group, not as individuals), this student would probably receive a 3. E doesn't give much to go on, but appears competent just the same. It is important to discuss this sort of issue openly with all raters and to agree on one approach - prior to scoring, if possible.

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Comments:

SUMMARY

Take a moment to review your scores on paper A through E. If your scores did not differ by more than one point in any case, you are in virtual agreement with the scores suggested by the author, and are probably ready to begin applying the range-finders to a larger sample and to construct exercises for classroom use.

If you disagreed significantly (i.e., a discrepancy of two or three points) with just one score, there is little cause for concern. Rating papers is a complex skill; there simply are no clear-cut right and wrong answers.

If you disagreed significantly in more than one case, recheck any comments you noted in the Rationale section; then ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I giving too much emphasis to mechanics?
2. Am I automatically downgrading a paper for spelling errors without considering spelling in balance with other factors?
3. Am I overly influenced by a paper's length?
4. Am I remembering to refer to the range-finder frequently?
5. Am I taking too much time to ponder each score? (Holistic scoring, remember, seldom requires more than 2-3 minutes per paper.)

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Students Learn by Doing Holistic Scoring

John O. White

I believe *holistic* scoring, the method used in mass testing, can be useful and interesting for both teachers and students. The word *holistic* reminds us that it is the paper as a whole we should evaluate, not merely its parts. Printed below is a typical holistic scoring guide; however, we should construct our own guides to emphasize particular writing concerns and then change them to reflect current emphases.

Instructions for Using the Scoring Guide: (1) Read the paper quickly to get a general impression. (2) In evaluating, keep in mind the characteristics described below. (3) Assign the score which reflects the overall quality of each paper.

Possible Scores:

6—Papers scored 6 will address all parts of the question and will be well organized. They will be fluent with good language control and sentence variety. They will be distinguished by details supporting or illustrating all points. There may be a few mechanical errors, but generally these will be superior papers.

5—Papers scored 5 will address all parts of the question and will be well organized. They may be less developed or detailed than 6 papers with possibly more mechanical problems, but they will have good language control with a clear statement of thesis.

4—These papers will be competent and cover all parts of the question, but they may not be so well organized as 6 or 5 papers. They will be fluent, though there will probably not be as much development or as many details. Papers may contain minor mechanical errors.

3—This score is appropriate for papers which ignore one or more parts of the assignment. They may be vague, general, abstract, or undeveloped with few supporting details. There may be problems in syntax, diction, or organization. These papers may be too brief, too general, or may have too many mechanical problems to be scored higher.

2—These papers will be thin in content or have serious problems in mechanics.

1—This score will be given to papers which show little understanding of the question or mechanics of writing.

Group reading of many papers involves several steps. A leader ordinarily directs the entire grading session and provides sample papers for teachers at tables (usually five to six per table) to grade according to the guide. After reading a number of sample papers and discussing the characteristics, teachers are usually able to come to some agreement on the score given each successive sample. Tables also have individual leaders who read random papers already scored by individual graders. These table leaders will try to find (and correct) anyone scoring a little too high or low in comparison with the scoring guide and the other readers. Papers are scored by two readers. If there is a discrepancy of more than one point between the two scores, an experienced reader will resolve the discrepancy by providing a third score.

I believe principles of holistic scoring can lead students to an understanding of what is expected in an essay. It is more than just having students read papers written by their classmates. They need a scoring guide, and students must reach a consensus on grades assigned. As they find that they can recognize various kinds of papers (and scores), they begin to recognize what sets better papers apart from weaker ones. They understand why other readers assign particular scores to their papers, and, in my experience, they improve their

writing considerably as they see what otherwise vague terms like *development, detail,* and *organization* mean.

To use holistic techniques in my classroom, I give a timed writing assignment, taking care that it requires no particular knowledge outside the question itself. For example:

> Almost all of us watch television. We may watch sports programs, situation comedies, movies, documentaries, wild life shows, dramas, etc. Think of the kinds of programs you particularly like to watch. *Writing Assignment:* Describe one kind of program you particularly enjoy. Explain the attractions of that kind of program. What do you think your choice of TV programs says about you?

The next day I distribute a scoring guide and discuss it with the class. I read sample papers aloud as I project them on a screen using an opaque projector. I ask the class to write down a score and a reason (according to the scoring guide) for assigning such a score. We may differ in our initial evaluations, but after discussion and examination of specifics, we usually come close to agreement. I might do this for eight or ten papers from the class, keeping them anonymous as we examine them closely. I then grade and return the papers as usual, except that I assign a holistic score number instead of a letter grade.

A few days later I give a similar assignment and have the class write another timed essay. Next day, I divide the class into groups of five and distribute the papers—with student names on them. I have not found this a problem partly because I emphasize courtesy and tact, mostly because I monitor the discussion carefully and lean on any who might be discourteous. Other instructors may wish to use assigned numbers to preserve anonymity.

I ask each group to grade its batch of five papers, passing the papers around the group, writing their tentative grades and comments on scratch paper. When all the papers in a group have been read, one student leads the discussion in which the group decides on a consensus score and reasons for that score. I ask groups to write a positive comment about any paper to go along with any suggestions for improvement.

Group discussion is vital. Students really talk about writing and writing skills as they discuss the papers. They decide what ideas are expressed too generally and which need development. They check for detail. They notice (or have pointed out to them by others) mechanical problems. Finally they compile the list of scores and reasons in accordance with the scoring guide. I collect the results and the papers, holistically score them, and put my score, the group's score, and our various comments at the top of the page before I return the set of papers.

All papers in a given semester are not, of course, scored holistically; the traditional method of marking papers has its own value. But the holistic process has a positive effect on student writing. I'm convinced their papers and approaches change significantly in some specific areas as they go through the process. Usually mechanics are *not* much improved, except in cases of carelessness. Mostly the improvement is in fluency, organization, development, and detail.

I often ask a class to develop its own scoring guide. We do it as a group, using the blackboard and deciding what kinds of papers should receive particular scores. Then I might grade their next set of papers according to that scoring guide. Classes do a good job of defining what is important in a paper and identifying kinds of papers which should receive particular scores.

Trained student graders can quickly recognize particular kinds of problems. They can spot the average *three*—a brief, over-generalized paper with some mechanical problems. They can recognize the classic *four*—the paper that covers the topic, has some fluency, but not the detail and development of a *five* or *six*. Students learn to recognize common patterns and problems. It seems to me they *have* to learn to recognize before they can make effective changes in their own writing.

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SECTION V

.USING WRITING TESTS AND TEST RESULTS IN THE CLASSROOM
.APPLYING WRITING TEST SKILL CLUSTERS TO INSTRUCTION
.SAGER WRITING SCALE
.DIEDERICH MODEL
.IMPROVING COMPOSITION - TRANSFERRING SPECIFIC GRAMMER SKILLS TO WRITING

USING WRITING TESTS AND TEST RESULTS IN THE CLASSROOM
Relating Test Skill Areas (Objectives) and Clusters to the Writing Process, Classroom Instruction and Evaluation

The ninth grade writing test consists of two parts, a multiple-choice section and a writing sample. The skill areas for the multiple choice section of the statewide ninth grade writing test are grouped into three clusters: Sentence Structure, Organization of Ideas and Editing. The essay portion of the test measures the students' direct ability to compose and communicate ideas in writing.

The essay sample and the three clusters for writing assessment represent important elements of the writing process. It is the writing process that is the primary vehicle which underlies instruction and evaluation. However, within the instructional environment the skills within these clusters are most often taught in isolation rather than integrated as a multi-stage activity of the actual writing process. To assume that students can or will "generalize" the skills of isolated grammar lessons to the process of using skills in written communication is out of context with the process of writing and composition development. Few students can infer writing concepts and procedures from practice alone, therefore, this section focuses on educational significance and instructional considerations for writing. In addition to the three clusters, handwriting and composing are reviewed as critical elements of the multi-stage writing process. The significance of each writing cluster and its relationship to the composing process is discussed subsequently. Instructional approaches for each cluster are discussed in general. It is recommended that the audience participates by sharing tried and proven instructional activities specifically related to their personal teaching experiences.

APPLYING WRITING TEST SKILL CLUSTERS TO INSTRUCTION

-Diane S. Braungart

WRITING CLUSTER	QUESTION TO BE ADDRESSED	SIGNIFICANCE	SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH
Editing: Capitalization, Punctuation, Spelling	Can the student spell, capitalize and punctuate correctly?	Correct spelling, capitalization of words & punctuation permit a reader to understand a written communication.	Audience Size: Individual or Group Approach: 1. Select one or two of the most frequent errors which appear in students' writing and concentrate on those. 2. Do not attempt to correct all mechanical "errors" at one time. 3. Selected correction of errors leads to greater mastery of mechanics by students. 4. Use the context of written communication in the instructional process. Resource: A modified Diedrich model or Sager scale (attached) may assist in the selection process when developed locally and based upon specific classroom goals or needs.

WRITING CLUSTER	QUESTION TO BE ADDRESSED	SIGNIFICANCE	SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH
Sentence Structure	Can the student compose sentences?	The ability to organize thoughts into sentence structures that are both recognizable and understandable by the reader is important to communication. Capitalization, punctuation and spelling play an important part in a student's ability to compare sentences and avoid run-ons and fragmented sentences. Those sentences should also be appropriate to the context of the passage. All sentences should contain at least one complete thought; the presence of a subject and a verb.	Audience Size: Individual or Group Approach: 1. Focus on the most common sentence structure errors within the context of a piece of writing. 2. Maintain a list of sentences that pose difficulties for students and concentrate instruction on those structures which are in need of communicating a complete thought.
Usage	Can the student use words appropriately?	The use of words that are grammatically correct for the context of the piece of writing is important for understanding communication. Usage includes appropriate tense form and sequence, as well as subject-verb agreement and using negatives correctly.	Audience Size: Individual or Group Approach: 1. Focus on the most common word usage errors within the context of a piece of writing. 2. Maintain a list of verbs that pose difficulties for students. 3. Have students write a brief paragraph using several forms of the verbs in order to assist students to focus on appropriate word usage.

WRITING CLUSTER	QUESTION TO BE ADDRESSED	SIGNIFICANCE	SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH
Composition	Can the student communicate ideas in writing?	Composition is the communication of ideas in writing.	Audience Size: Individual or Group Approach: 1. Students can learn to compose by practicing their skills and by actually writing compositions or essays. 2. Survey the class for topics of interest. Select a topic and have students write brief passages. 3. Allow students to share their work and provide feedback to one another. 4. After receiving feedback, let students revise their passages.
Handwriting	Can the student write legibly?	Legible handwriting is a prerequisite for understanding written communication.	Audience Size: Individual or Group Approach: 1. Provide instruction for students in the importance of legibility in written communication. 2. Have students share pieces of writing varying in degree of legibility to assist them in recognizing their own deficiencies and the importance of handwriting.

Source: Educational Improvement Center - South

FAIR, ACCURATE, EFFICIENT GRADING?

Possibly A Writing Scale

Writing scales, as the insert shows, can be made to reflect any skill clusters or qualities of writing considered important. Generally, the scales include a high to low range and they force the reader's attention on specific areas of concern.

Standard scales, like that used in the Diederich Plan, can be used, or scales can be developed locally. In fact, an individual teacher may want to develop a scale based on specific classroom goals or needs.

If a decision is made to create a scale, topics to be rated should be carefully considered. Likewise, much attention should be given to the designation of descriptive characteristics in which each rating is based (see Sager scale.)

Before a scale is widely used, it should first be tested on sample writings.

Things to keep in mind are the appropriateness of the topic and the specificity of the scale. The descriptive characteristics should be specific enough to simplify the rating process. You should make revisions as needed.

Although scales are often used to rank students, the ratings may also be correlated to a grade.

SAGER WRITING SCALE

Rating	Vocabulary	Organization	Elaborate	Structure
High 3	New, interesting words create vivid impressions Exact words Unusual expressions, word combinations and comparisons	Ideas easy to follow Events in logical order Main idea ties all together Beginning interesting Action builds Conclusion sums up Relevant details	Variety of related ideas Details create pictures Details make reader feel Details create impressions Ideas fully developed Ideas follow easily	Variety of sentences Ideas stated accurately and fluently Complete sentences Can be read aloud with ease
2	Words adequately descriptive Some words exact Some new, interesting words Some variety of word choice Some vivid words and comparisons	Main idea--but not well arranged Some events out or order Main idea ties together Good beginning-good ending--but may ramble Relevant details	Ideas clear but create little impression Ideas orderly but lack punch Some details stimulate senses Some ideas fully developed Some ideas inadequate or overdone	Ideas accurate but not always fluent Most sentences complete Some variety of sentences may sound stiff or uneven in parts
1	A few interesting words--little variety of choice Uses general words more often than exact words Few descriptive words or phases	Main idea--but many irrelevant events Main events out of order Weak beginning and/or ending	More detail is needed Ideas hard to follow Important questions left unanswered	Ideas sometime hard to follow Some complete sentences Run-ons and fragments Little sentence variety Primer style Hard to read aloud
Low 0	Common overworked words Little variety	Jumbled arrangements of ideas Main idea unclear Beginning, middle, end unclear	Ideas not clear No details Ideas jumbled and/or uncorrected	Meaning unclear Few complete sentences Omissions and fragments No sentence variety Story confused--senseless when read aloud

Source: Educational Improvement Center - South

ATING AN ENTIRE SCHOOL?

Perhaps the Diederich Model

Although the Diederich Plan for ranking large numbers of students takes a year to complete, the effort may be well worthwhile.

Using this approach, students write four compositions on pre-determined topics during the year. These compositions are then number coded to ensure grading impartiality. Raters who've practiced using the Diederich Scale read and rate the papers.

For the ratings to be statistically valid, all papers must be read and rated by two evaluators. The combination of both ratings results in the score.

Although one sample writing may give some limited insight into a student's writing ability, no conclusions can be drawn until all four papers have been written and evaluated.

At the end of the year, scores from each student's paper are totaled. Total scores for each student will range between 40 and 200.

These scores are then entered in an alphabetical listing of the student body.

The school has been ranked; and this rank ordering can be put to, at least, the following uses:

- to identify the weakest and strongest writers in the school
- to see where students rank in relation to each other
- to provide counseling information for course selection
- to indicate a student's growth from year to year, and
- to offer insight into program effectiveness.

Importantly, using the Diederich Plan means that evaluation is based on several writing samples, spans ten months of instruction, and reflects objective ratings by more than one evaluation.

DIEDERICH SCALE

	Low		Middle		High
General Merit					
Ideas	2	4	6	8	10
Organization	2	4	6	8	10
Wording	1	2	3	4	5
Flavor	1	2	3	4	5
Mechanics					
Usage	1	2	3	4	5
Punctuation	1	2	3	4	5
Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Handwriting	1	2	3	4	5

Rater _____ Total _____

Student Identification Slip

Six Digit Number. . . . . Topic Number: 1 2 3 4 (circle one)

Name. . . . . .Total Score. . . . . .

Teacher's Name. . . . . .

USING THE DIEDERICH SCALE

Before students begin the essay:

- Students fill out a short I.D. slip
- Six digit number from I.D. slip is used on student essay instead of name
- I.D. slips collected

The rating process:

- Raters rate quickly, using the Scale
- Each paper given two ratings
- Papers collected and collated - (one paper, one student I.D., two Raters' Scales)
- Scores are combined and entered on student I.D. slip
- Scores entered on alphabetical listing of student body

IMPROVING COMPOSITION
TRANSFERRING SPECIFIC GRAMMAR SKILLS TO WRITING

By: Billie Chambers
EIC-South

Recognition Skills:

One phase of learning about language is characterized by being able to identify parts of speech, tell a sentence from a fragment, or name common punctuation elements. At this level students can: pick out nouns, find the subject, distinguish between a comma and an apostrophe, etc., etc.

The development of such abilities is typified by activities like:

1. Underline the subject of the following sentence:

   -Bob walked to the store.
   (subject)

2. Identify the pronouns in the following sentence:
   -He went with her; but they didn't find the necklace she had lost.

Editing Skills:

A second phase of language activity requires that students do more than just identify or remember names; it requires that students be able to correct, manipulate or alter language. This is the editing stage and it is typified by activities which ask students to: pick the correct verb, capitalize the appropriate word or letters, turn a sentence fragment into a complete sentence, etc., etc.

The development of such abilities is typified by activities like:

1. Select the correct verb form in the following sentence:

   -The boys (is, are) good friends.

2. Capitalize the appropriate words in the following sentence:

   -i saw mr. smith at the corner of high and main.

Although both of these elements of language development; recognition skills and editing skills, may be considered important to the language development process, it is certain that a 3rd phase, the application stage is crucial.

Application/Origination:

During this stage, the student is asked to apply any skills he has learned as a part of his grammar instruction to his own composition. The 3rd phase of language activity requires that students actually compose (sometime orally) their own material while remembering to punctuate, make subjects and verbs agree, use descriptive language, etc.

The development of such composition abilities is typified by activities like:

1. Write a sentence, poem, paragraph, theme, play, character sketch, etc.
2. Write a sentence using one contraction and one proper noun.
3. Use the following words in a paragraph: juicy, golden, nectarine, skin, sweet, liquid, squeeze, segments, round.

Although language experts may disagree on the role and/or use of grammar instruction - (in whatever form) as a prerequisite to writing - all concur that frequent composition activities are crucial to language mastery.

Do composition activities need to be full length essays for students to learn to apply specific skills? Actually, not at all. Frequent work at the sentence level can help accomplish the same goal. In order to achieve maximum transfer of specific skills to general composing, the following sentence writing activities are suggested. In each, it is assumed that all skills of punctuation, mechanics and usage previously taught will be applied.

I. Dictation

Select a sentence that incorporates specific skills that have recently been taught and need to be practiced. Dictate one complete sentence that includes these items...Example, Mr. Smith cried, "You should be more careful when you cross the street." Give students credit for each skill they have correctly used.

II. Word Order

Give students a sentence that is scrambled. Have students rearrange it correctly. Example, isn't Bob quick very fast but he is. When students have rearranged the sentence, check the appropriate punctuation and spelling.

III. Sentence Completion

Give students an incomplete sentence and ask them to complete it. However and most importantly, assign some type of standard for the completion or you will get simple, often thoughtless solutions. Example, I'll call you _____.
tell when and where

IV. Sentence Expansion

Give students a kernal sentence. Have students expand the sentence by adding specific information. Example, Sally made a dress.

Add	Who Sally is.
	When she made the dress.
Answer	My best friend, Sally, made a dress last weekend.

V. Sentence Construction

Because sentences are constructed to give information, students can learn to build sentences this way. Give students a series of questions and ask that they build a sentence that answers these questions.

Example - Write a sentence that tells who - what she did - when and why.

Answer - Gail went shopping last night to get a birthday present for her sister.

VI. Sentence Combining

Based on the material of William Strong these activities allow students to write expanded sentences. Give students 3-5 simple sentences and have them combine them into one expanded sentence.

Example - Hank Smith is bald.
Hank Smith is overweight.
Hank Smith is 55 years old.

Answer - Hank Smith is fifty-five years old, bald and overweight.

SECTION VI

.WE WANT TO IMPROVE WRITING INSTRUCTION, WHAT CAN WE DO?

WE WANT TO IMPROVE WRITING INSTRUCTION

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Useful strategies for teaching writing do not always have to be original ideas, or unique processes that rise from an ever-budding well of creativity. Sometimes, if one's originality dries up, other people's suggestions may prime the pump.

The following ideas were collected from teachers and schools throughout South Jersey. Some are comprehensive, complex, long-term and require a high degree of thought and commitment. Others are less complicated and more easily implemented. Perhaps one, some, or several will prove useful in one form or another.

1. Develop a professional library of current books, articles, journals.

2. Designate time for writing; 3 times a week; 20 minutes a day.

3. Encourage writing across the curriculum.

   a. Hold content area essay contest, e.g. Pollution, ERA - Yea or Nay
   b. Provide for cross department planning. English department meets with history department to plan a term paper, essay, theme or report.
   c. Provide content teachers with a list of appropriate writing tasks and suggested activities for teaching and using these tasks.

4. Implement an assessment progrm in writing. Examples:
   a. Collect samples (pre and post).
   b. Collect and retain samples (regularly).
   c. Develop a writing test and scoring process.

5. Bring in speaker(s) to talk with students on careers in writing, importance of writing.

6. Publish literary magazines or newpapers at elementary as well as secondary levels.

7. Publicly display examples of good writing.

8. Hold a Young Authors Conference.

9. Encourage students to write a book each year.

10. Establish writing clubs.

11. Publish a school or district level anthology of students work.

12. Adopt a writing project that has already been developed, such as Weehawken's ILA or New Jersey Writing Project.

13. Include writing activities as part of the SIPs (Student Improvement Plans).

14. Develop a curriculum guide in writing; or at least a systematic list of instructional objectives in writing. Disseminate this information and urge (require) its implementation.

15. Group students to make writing instruction more homogeneous, or incorporate writing instruction into situations where ability grouping already occurs, such as compensatory education classes, reading groups.

16. Provide regular staff development experiences on writing instruction, in-service, department meetings, team meetings, grade level or faculty meetings.

17. Establish a writing lab for students who need extra help.

18. Develop an activity bank (a card file) of writing activities that work. Arrange them by levels and share them with colleagues.

19. Produce a monthly publication, news release, or memo called What We're Writing. This highlights student work but also gives credit to teachers who teach writing. Good ideas and how to's could be included.

20. Develop a style sheet. Use consistent form throughout grades such as heading and handwriting requirements.

21. Give a writing (composition) grade on report cards. NOTE: If there is a grade, there must be work to back it up.

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SECTION VII

CONSIDERING COMPOSITION:
- .OVERALL PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS
- .PROGRAM MATERIALS
- .INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

WRITING INSTRUCTION - CHECK-UP ON INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES:
- .CLASSROOM ROUTINES
- .PUPIL PARTICIPATION
- .TEACHING PROCEDURES

USE OF DATA

Considering Composition*

Before implementing a new writing program or doing a major revision of the existing one, it might be useful to objectively consider various aspects of composition as it currently exists in your district.

Although the questions which follow will not cover every aspect of an effective composition program, they may serve to focus your attention on some of the more critical features.

Part 1 - Overall Program Characteristics

	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. We have identified skills to be taught at each grade level.	___	___	___
2. We have identified those skills which should be mastered at a grade level.	___	___	___
3. We have identified specific writing tasks to be emphasized at each grade level.	___	___	___
4. We have determined our reasons for doing an assessment.	___	___	___
e.g. to rank all students to assess individual student growth to provide information for future instruction to determine whether students are performing satisfatorily in general or in specific skill areas	___	___	___
5. We have decided on a means of assessment e.g. (1) use of standardized objective test (2) collection of a writing sample(s) (3) combination of both	___	___	___
In using a writing sample we have			
6a. designated writing tasks and topics to be used for assessment.	___	___	___
6b. developed a method and criteria for evaluating the samples	___	___	___

Part II - Program Materials

7. We have a language text or instructional materials that adequately support our efforts to teach composition skills.	___	___	___

*Written by: Billie Chambers
EIC - South

	Yes	No	Not Sure
8. We have supplementary materials which enable us to meet individual needs.	___	___	___
Part III - Instructional Practices			
9. Teachers understand and use pre-writing strategies for the majority of their writing assignments.	___	___	___
10. Students receive composition instruction regularly at least three times a week.	___	___	___
11. Writing is emphasized across the curriculum.	___	___	___
12. Students are encouraged to share their writing in a variety of ways.	___	___	___
13. Students are systematically involved in the evaluation of their own work and the work of their peers.	___	___	___
14. Students receive instruction that is systematic, moving from less difficult to more complex assignments.	___	___	___
15. Instruction is coordinated from one grade level to another.	___	___	___
16. Instruction acknowledges individual differences (below grade level, gifted, etc.)	___	___	___
Part IV			
17. Teachers feel they have adequate knowledge and/or training to teach writing.	___	___	___
18. There is a unified commitment to improving writing (teachers, administrators, parents)	___	___	___

Part V

List any factors not included in items 1-18 which might be having a negative effect on writing improvement in your district.

WRITING INSTRUCTION - Check-up on Instructional Practices*

Check areas of strength. Number any which you want to become goals.

CLASSROOM ROUTINES

_____ 1. Routines are established so that students are accustomed to write daily.

_____ 2. Students have writing folders.

_____ 3. Students have easy access to these folders.

_____ 4. Writing groups are set up as needed so that students can work independently.

_____ 5. A classroom library of resource materials (dictionary, thesauruses) is available for student use.

_____ 6. Varied types of writing assignments are given.

_____ 7. Optional writing assignments are available.

_____ 8. The classroom has student writing posted regularly.

_____ 9. Materials on professional writers and their writings are displayed.

_____ 10. Students see their teacher write. Their teacher shares writing with them.

PUPIL PARTICIPATION

_____ 1. Keeps all written work in a folder or notebook.

_____ 2. Makes journal entries from 3 to 5 times a week.

_____ 3. Makes rough drafts or outlines as needed.

_____ 4. Shares work in progress with other students and/or teacher.

_____ 5. Listens to other students' work and offers constructive feedback.

_____ 6. Revises and edits when necessary.

_____ 7. Uses dictionary, thesaurus, handbook.

_____ 8. Proofreads all final drafts.

*Written by: Billie Chambers
EIC - South

TEACHING PROCEDURES

_____ 1. Writing activities are identified and sequenced as part of a planned program of instruction.

_____ 2. Student needs are met by individualizing and grouping instruction.

_____ 3. Pre-writing activities are used to motivate, stimulate, seed or organize writing.

_____ 4. Journal entries and/or free writing are used as a source of ideas.

_____ 5. Classroom writing activity time is varied from 5-minute "do-nows" to complete lessons.

_____ 6. Much of the writing involves transactions in real situations--forms, messages, notices, and letters.

USE OF DATA*

In general, we need to determine:

a. What diagnostic information we have about individual student's writing needs.

b. What individual classroom teachers will emphasize in their lessons based on identifying common needs within a class.

c. What program improvement needs have surfaced based on identifying common deficiencies across most classes (common to a particular grade level or cluster of grades) and/or special populations, (e.g. gifted and talented).

Specifically, as a basis for instructional decisions, think about:

a. What writing skills do students lack?

   1. Pre-writing generation of ideas, cohesiveness of ideas, organization of ideas, etc.

   2. Language style, grammar, limited vocabulary, spelling, lack of organizationa, etc.

b. Will you need to emphasize those skills more, present them in a different way, etc.

*Joanne Frank
New Jersey Department
of Education
Middlesex County Office

c. Were there common deficiencies in the papers? (If so, list them).

d. What do you do now to teach those skills? Do you need to:

1. Spend more time teaching them?

2. Emphasize their importance?

3. Teach them differently?

4. Present them differently to <u>different</u> students in recognition of different learning styles?

5. Cluster students together with like deficiencies?

6. Give teachers in all content areas ideas about how to emphasize the use of these skills?

<u>Specifically</u>, as a basis for program improvement decisions think about:

a. What skills do most students seem to lack regardless of class?

b. Identify what your program does now to provide those skills, e.g.:

1. Do you have a formal writing program including a skills array?

2. What is included in your definition of "a writing program?"

3. Do you actually implement all parts of and skills related to the program?

4. Do all teachers use the same criteria for determing student success?

5. How are skills taught?

6. When are they taught?

7. Do content area teachers provide opportunities to apply these skills?

8. Do teachers make writing important to students?

9. Does the administration and board support writing as an important part of the basic skills program?

c. What changes or additions/deletions should we make in our program? e.g.:

1. Engaged time

2. Materials used

3. Program content/skills

4. Instructional methodology

5. Classroom management

6. Evaluation criteria

7. Reinforcement strategies in content areas

8. Emphasis of importance to students and parents, etc.

9. Know why your making these changes - look for ideas of what to change to from your own experience and expertise, research studies, model programs, etc.

d. Decide what activities and resources are needed to make agreed upon changes or additions. Include or consider such things as:

1. A need for additional planning time.

2. A need to review/preview alternative materials, programs in action, research studies, etc.

3. A need for orientation or training to new materials or techniques.

4. A need for time and materials to prepare teacher-made materials if appropriate.

5. Time to try out the new program and talk about how it's working - "de-bugging".

You should record (write down):

a. A statement of program deficiencies.

b. What results you hope a new program will get for kids.

c. An outline of actual changes, additions and deletions with a reason for each.

d. A statement of activities and resources needed to make the agreed upon changes.

Why?

Because this information gives you the best chance of getting what you need to do a better job with your students.

APPENDIX A

.1982-1983 TEST DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS
.WRITING TEST FORMAT AND SPECIFICATIONS

1982-1983 WRITING TEST DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Charles Barragato
Dumont Public Schools

Nancy Broz
Moorestown Township Public Schools

Dr. John Casey
Bridgewater-Raritan Regional

Billie Chambers
E.I.C. - South

Dr. Miriam Chaplin
Rutgers University - Camden

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New Jersey Congress of Parents
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Frances Lynn Galbraith
Lenape Regional

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Woodbridge Township Public Schools

Jeanette Lyde
Paterson Public Schools

Dr. Donald Maiocco
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Elizabeth Marion
Essex County Vocational Public School

Dr. Helen McDonnell
Ocean Township Public Schools

Dr. John O'Breza, President
NJ Council of Teachers of English
Cherry Hill Public Schools

Dr. Dan O'Day
Kean College

Martha Palmere
West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional

*Willa Spicer
South Brunswick Township Schools

Sharon Smith
Paterson Public Schools

Frances Stevens
Metuchen Public Schools

**Richard Swartz
Camden County College

**Dr. William Walling
Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Robert Wolfenbarger
NJ State Board of Education-Trenton

*Lynn Galbraith, Chairperson
Publication Sub-committee

*Willa Spicer, Chairperson
Specification Sub-committee

**Chief Readers and Consultants
for the New Jersey Statewide Writing
Assessment Program

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
I. Sentence Structure Overview The student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of sentence structure by selecting sentence revisions which illustrate clarity of expression and appropriate knowledge of: A) subordination and coordination B) the correct use of modifiers C) correct use of standard English The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	Sentence structure will be assessed using the following five conditions: A. Given a sentence which may contain an error in sentence construction, the student will read the sentence and select the best correction from four possible choices. NOTE: 1. The error may be related to a word, a phrase or a full sentence. 2. The error within the sentence will be underlined. 3. The underlined word will be repeated as the first answer choice.	Each sentence below has an underlined portion which may be correct or incorrect. From the four choices, choose the one you believe is correct. 1. She ran quickly to the end of the pier and <u>jumps</u> into the water. A. jumps B. jumping C.* jumped D. had jumped 2. He walked along the river bank swinging his arms, <u>whistled</u> a tune, and thinking of Joan. A. whistled B.* whistling C. had whistled D. with a whistle of 3. Ralph is a very good basketball player, <u>being that he is very tall.</u> A. being that he is very tall. B.*because he is very tall. C. in which he is very tall. D. from his being very tall.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.		4. Stewart lived with a friend whom he trusted in a small apartment. A. Stewart lived with a friend whom he trusted in a small apartment. B.*Stewart lived in a small apartment with a friend whom he trusted. C. Stewart with a friend whom he trusted lived in a small apartment. D. With a friend whom he trusted in a small apartment lived Stewart. Source: McGraw-Hill, "Handbook of Grammar" 5. Shouting and waving our hands, Tom and me ran up to the teacher who had just entered the lunchroom. A. Shouting and waving our hands, Tom and me ran up to the teacher who had just entered the lunchroom. B.*Shouting and waving our hands, Tom and I ran up to the teacher who had just entered the lunchroom. C. Tom and me, shouting and waving our hands ran up to the teacher who had just entered the lunchroom. D. Just entering the lunchroom Tom and I ran up to the teacher shouting and waving our hands.

60

61

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	B. Given several stated ideas, the student will read each idea and select the sentence which most effectively combines the information into a well-constructed sentence. NOTE: Discriminate levels of difficulty for test items and internally structure items to reflect variety: 1) items in a series 2) compound sentences 3) phrases and clauses within sentences	Choose the best way to combine the following ideas into one well-constructed sentence. 1. My favorite food is pizza. I like pizza with tomato sauce. I like extra cheese on it. A. My favorite food is pizza and tomato sauce and extra cheese on it. B. My favorite food is pizza, I like tomato sauce and extra cheese on it. C.*My favorite food is pizza with tomato sauce and extra cheese on it. D. My favorite food, pizza and tomato sauce and cheese. 2. Paul Simon is a musician. Whose words and music will live forever. A. Paul Simon is a musician. Whose words and music will live forever. B.*Paul Simon is a musician whose words and music will live forever. C. Paul Simon is a musician, his words and music will live forever. D. Paul Simon is a musician, words and music, will live forever.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	C. Given a sentence and a partial new construction of that sentence, the student will read what is given and select the words that correctly complete the newly constructed sentence. NOTE: The partial new construction of the given sentence will be underlined.	Choose the words that best complete the newly constructed sentence. 1. The water was almost freezing, but George went swimming anyway. Rewrite, beginning with: George went swimming The rest of the sentence will be: A. and the water was almost freezing. B. but the water was almost freezing. C.* even though the water was almost freezing. D. because the water was almost freezing. 2. The man pushed the shopping cart too hard and knocked a stack of cans to the floor. Rewrite, beginning with: Pushing the shopping cart too hard, The rest of the sentence will be: A. *the man knocked a stack of cans to the floor. B. and knocking a stack of cans to the floor. C. a stack of cans was knocked to the floor. D. so it knocked a stack of cans to the floor.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	D. Given a writing sample (a sentence or a paragraph), the student will read the writing sample and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of ideas by selecting from four alternatives the appropriate transition for each incomplete sentence. NOTE: Test items will be structured to reflect: 1. comparison and contrast 2. cause and effect 3. chronology	Read the paragraph below. Choose the word that best completes each sentence. (1)Saturday night Jan had to decide _____ to go to the movies or babysit. (2)_____ she had already spent all her money, she decided to babysit. (3)She could _____ go to the movies on Sunday. A. Because B. Since C. Whether D. Then

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER I: Sentence Structure

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction: 1. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently. 2. The student will be able to use standard written usage. 3. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. 4. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently. 5. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly. 6. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly. 7. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	E. Given a writing sample (a sentence or a paragraph) which may contain an error of usage, the student will read the writing sample and select the incorrect item. NOTE: The errors within the sentence or paragraph will be underlined.	Find the error in the sentence. My cousin's (A) friend is (B) the only person I know who is ignoranter (C) about algebra than I. (D) 1. A 2. B 3.* C 4. D

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
1. The student will be able to select the best general statement (main idea) for a given set of related ideas.	Given a set of related ideas presented in paragraph format, the student will read the paragraph and select from four statements the most appropriate general statement (main idea) for that paragraph.	Read the paragraph below. Choose from four statements the one that best expresses the main idea of the paragraph. Once nearly extinct in the East, bald eagles have recently been found nesting in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Moreover, a few small colonies of eagles established themselves in Maryland and Delaware last year. Several eaglets were hatched in these colonies. A. Bald eagles are among the most beautiful birds. B. *Bald eagles are becoming more numerous along the East Coast. C. The bald eagle is America's national symbol. D. Soon there will be too many eagles for the environment to support them all.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
2. The student will be able to substantiate a general statement (main idea) by selecting the appropriate statement of supporting detail.	Given a main idea presented in sentence format, the student will read the sentence and select from four possible supporting details that statement which best supports the main idea.	Choose the detail which best supports the main idea. 1. The public was angry at the Board of Education. A. Many people attended the public meeting of the Board of Education. B. The newspaper told the public about the meeting of the Board of Education. C.*The people in the audience shouted loudly. D. The members of the Board of Education are elected to make decisions about the schools. 2. When I was a child, I thought as a child. A. My brother is four years old and has blue eyes. B.*I used to believe that monsters were under my bed. C. I babysit for my neighbor's children once a week. D. Many children throw food on the floor instead of eating it.

72

73

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
3. The student will be able to relate details that substantiate a general statement (main idea) and identify details inappropriate to the main idea.	Given a set of related ideas presented in paragraph format, the student will read the paragraph and select from four statements the stated details inappropriate to the general statement (main idea).	Choose the sentence which does not belong in this paragraph. Dieting has become the favorite American pastime. (1)Many books, articles, and advertisements flash the latest "wonder" diet. (2)My dog is getting fat. (3)Though the focus on dieting shows an awareness of the importance of a healthy body, it also presents dangers. (4)Some of these diets may cheat your body of essential nutrients. A. 1 B* 2 C. 3 D. 4 Source: Adapted from the New Jersey Statewide Testing Program 1982-1983, Grade 9, Reading Test.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
4. The student will be able to reorganize a set of ideas into a logical arrangement.	Given a set of sentences organized in a random manner, the student will read each sentence and logically reorganize the stated ideas by selecting from four (three) sets of sentence combinations that set which most accurately constitutes a logical arrangement. NOTE: Test items will be structured to reflect 1. time sequence 2. classification	Choose the best way to reorganize a set of ideas. 1. (Alternative measurement strategy) Choose the paragraph that has reorganized a set of ideas into a logical arrangement. A. Most singers place themselves in one musical slot. They are rock singers or soul singers or country singers, or some other kind of singers. She has sung tunes by great song writers of every style. But it's always been hard to find a label for Linda Ronstadt. B. But it's always been hard to find a label for Linda Ronstadt. Most singers place themselves in one musical slot. She has sung tunes by great song writers of every style. They are rock singers or soul singers or country singers, or some other kind of singers. C. She has sung tunes by great song writers of every style. Most singers place themselves in one musical slot. They are rock singers or soul singers or country singers, or some other kind of singers. But it's always been hard to find a label for Linda Ronstadt. D. *Most singers place themselves in one musical slot. They are rock singers or soul singers or country singers, or some other kind of singers. But it's always been hard to find a label for Linda Ronstadt. She has sung tunes by great song writers of every style.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER II: Organization of Ideas

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
4. (cont.) The student will be able to reorganize a set of ideas into a logical arrangement.		(cont.) Source: Scholastic Scope February 11, 1983 Vol. 31 - No. 15 Choose the best way to reorganize a set of ideas. 1. (Alternative measurement strategy) A. She has sung tunes by great song writers of every style. B. They are rock singers or soul singers or country singers, or some other kind of singers. C. Most singers place themselves in one musical slot. D. But it's always been hard to find a label for Linda Ronstadt. 1. C - B - A - D 2. D - C - A - B 3. A - C - B - D 4.*C - B - D - A

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER III: Editing

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to proofread for the purpose of identifying common mechanical mistakes - capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	Given a sample of writing (a sentence or a paragraph) that may contain mechanical errors, the student will read the writing sample and recognize the error from four underlined choices	Proofread the paragraph and find the error that should be corrected. The teachers' faculty room (A) was buzzing when Mrs. Haaz, the principal, (B) entered. "Our P.T.A. wants to thank you for your (C) fine teaching and enthusiasm for students' education. A luncheon will be served this Friday in you honor," She said. (D) A. teachers' faculty room B. principal C. your D.*She said.

80

81

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER III: Editing

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to proofread for the purpose of identifying common mechanical mistakes - capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	Given a sample of writing (a sentence or a paragraph) that may contain mechanical errors, the student will read the writing sample, and recognize the error from four underlined choices and select the appropriate correction for the given error. NOTE: Spelling Word Source: Students' Essays - Field Test (fall administration) Students' Essays - New Jersey Statewide Writing Test (spring administration) The errors within the sentence or paragraph will be underlined.	Choose the appropriate correction for the error. "In the southeast (A) part of New Jersey there are (B) 1,000 square miles of land called the Pine Barrens. Settlers gave there (C) land this name because its (D) sandy soil made it hard to farm, and pine trees covered much of its area." A. Southeast B. they're C.*their D. it's Source: Adapted from the New Jersey State Test, 1980-1981 Grade 6, Reading Test

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER IV: Writing Sample

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires him or her to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	The essay topic selected will be one which allows a variety of student written responses. In order to evaluate the appropriateness of topic, the following elements need to be considered as selection criteria: 1. The student understands the topic and produces a written response that allows for responsible appraisal. 2. The topic allows the student to respond with specific examples and supporting detail. 3. The topic elicits a range and variety of responses. 4. The topic provides for a statistically reasonable distribution of scores on a holistic scoring scale of 1 to 6. 5. The topic does not elicit highly emotional responses from either writer or reader. 6. The topic does not appear to favor any single group defined by gender or cultural background. 7. The topic allows the student's writing to exhibit quality, appropriateness, and enthusiasm of response. 8. The topic allows for a reasonable degree of scorer agreement. 9. The topic realistically sustains reader interest over a period of time.	Essay Topic Think of something that you thought was unfair. It might be something unfair that happened to you, to a friend, or to someone you didn't know. Write an essay that tells what happened and how you felt about it. Source: 1982-1983 New Jersey Statewide Writing Program, Part 2: Writing Test.

GRADE 9: Writing

CLUSTER IV: Writing Sample

SKILL AREA	CONDITIONS USED TO CONSTRUCT TEST ITEM	EXAMPLE ITEM(S)
The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires him or her to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	NOTE: 1. Time allowance is provided for pre-writing, writing and editing of the essay. 2. Every student will receive an essay topic sheet. The essay topic will be presented both in script and read aloud. 3. Students will be directed to write on the topic given and do their best to write a clear, well-organized essay, using their best written English. 4. Students are allowed to print their essay or use cursive. 5. A dictionary or any other reference material is not allowed during the test.	

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

Writing CLUSTER: Sentence Structure

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
I. Sentence Structure		
1. The student will be able to combine information into a well-written sentence using standard written English.	X	X
2. The student will be able to construct sentences using appropriate coordinating and subordinating ideas in the sentence.		X
3. The student will be able to use transitions to demonstrate an understanding of chronology, cause and effect and comparison and contrast.		X
4. The student, at his or her own level, will be able to identify and correct errors in sentence construction:		
a. The student will be able to use verbs correctly and consistently.	X	X
b. The student will be able to use standard written usage.	X	X
c. The student will be able to avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences.	X	X
d. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly and consistently.	X	X
e. The student will be able to place modifiers and modifying phrases properly.	X	X
f. The student will be able to use comparative words correctly.	X	X
g. The student will be able to use parallel structure correctly.	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

Writing CLUSTER: Organization of Ideas

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
II. Organization of Ideas		
1. The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires the student to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	X	X
2. The student will be able to write unified paragraphs.	X	X
3. The student will be able to organize information in a variety of ways:	X	X
a. chronological sequence b. classification system c. cause and effect d. comparison and contrast		
4. The student will be able to use language that expresses his or her purpose and addresses his or her audience.	X	X
5. The student will be able to select examples and details which support a main idea (general statement).	X	X
6. The student will be able to write a general statement (main idea) for a set of related details.	X	X
7. The student will be able to eliminate information which does not belong in a paragraph.	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

Writing CLUSTER: Editing

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
III. Editing		
1. The student will be able to revise his or her own writing and edit the writing of others.	X	X
2. The student, at his or her own level, will be able to identify and correct errors in mechanics:		
a. spelling	X	X
b. punctuation	X	X
c. capitalization	X	X

CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS AT PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVELS

Writing CLUSTER: Writing Sample

The skills identified in this array are important in the development of a broad-based curriculum. This array is intended as a guide and not as an all inclusive curriculum. However, these are the skills which students should master to succeed on the ninth grade test.

SKILL AREA	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT PRIMARY GRADE LEVEL	SKILL AREA EXAMINED AT INTERMEDIATE GRADE LEVEL
IV. The student will be able to generate a written response to a topic that requires him or her to reflect on personal experiences and ideas.	X	X

APPENDIX B

SUCCESSFUL INGREDIENTS OF EFFECTIVE WRITING PROGRAMS

.NATIONAL HUMANITIES SYMPOSIUM
.ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

SUCCESSFUL INGREDIENTS OF EFFECTIVE WRITING PROGRAMS

Source: National Humanities Faculty
Phi Beta Kappa, The American Council of Learned Societies
The American Council on Education

In Spring, 1982 the National Humanities Symposium on Writing in the Schools identified six successful ingredients of effective writing programs:

1. Writing is to be considered as an eclectic approach.
2. Attention to writing must be schoolwide and across content areas.
3. Teachers need to recognize that students do have something to write.
4. Teachers themselves need to write and read their writing to students.
5. Writing standards need to be established and understood by both school faculty and students.
6. Good reading promotes good writing.

* * * *

Robert Grunlach has identified six roles that teachers play in relationship to their students as writers. The six roles include:

1. Appreciative audience - react as an interested reader
2. Collaborating editor - write with students
3. Publisher - show the writer's work to other readers
4. Archivist - file work for future reference
5. Educator/Trainer - coach and guide the writer
6. Evaluator - assess the quality of writing and the progress it indicates.

Source: Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development Newsletter: ACSD Curriculum Update
June 1981

Robert Grunlach
Director of Writing Programs
Northwestern University

APPENDIX C

VALIDATED WRITING PROGRAMS THAT WORK

.INDIVIDUALIZED LANGUAGE ARTS (I.L.A.) WEEHAWKEN, NEW JERSEY
.PROJECT WRITE - GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY
.READ-WRITE - NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
.NEW JERSEY WRITING PROJECT - SOUTH BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
.WRITING INTO READING - WEST WINDSOR - PLAINSBORO, NEW JERSEY
.FERGUSON-FLORISSANT WRITING PROJECT - FERGUSON, MISSOURI

VALIDATED WRITING PROGRAMS THAT WORK

The following five writing programs from New Jersey and one from Missouri have been validated at state and/or federal levels. They were developed in real classrooms with real students, where their value could be demonstrated and measured.

In order to be recognized and validated the programs had to meet the following criteria:

1. Statistical Significance
2. Educational Significance
3. Cost-effectiveness
4. Exportability

Descriptions of the programs are given below.

Individualized Language Arts -- Weehawken, New Jersey: A state and nationally validated program, grades K-12, that combines a language experience approach with techniques derived from modern linguistic theory to enhance skills in written composition. It relates writing to reading, speaking and listening and can supplement existing writing programs and materials, or can serve as an independent composition program. The teacher evaluates writing samples composed by students on self-selected topics. Utilizing criteria common to nearly all language art programs, the teacher is then able to assign priorities to the needs of the whole class, groups of students, and individual youngsters. For each objective stemming from this diagnosis, a teacher's resource manual prescribes a variety of writing or rewriting techniques for all content areas involving writing. Motivation for writing is strengthened by a "communication spiral" that links composition to the other language arts and to real-life experience. A record keeping system permits students, teachers, administrators and parents to observe growth in writing proficiency from month to month and grade to grade. The program can be combined readily with existing language arts curricula and objectives.

Project WRITE -- Glassboro, New Jersey: Project WRITE is a state validated K-12 writing program designed to improve students' composing ability while maintaining the separate skills of spelling, handwriting, mechanics and usage. Based on research, observation and classroom experimentation, the project offers a unique teacher-developed approach to classroom writing instruction. Operating throughout levels K-12, the program employs a writing process approach that is developmentally tailored to students' needs. National validation is pending.

READ-WRITE -- Newark, New Jersey: A state and nationally validated program in reading and related language arts that uses techniques and prescriptions to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary in grades 4-6. It is designed to be consistently applied by the classroom teacher to augment the basic reading program. The prescriptions are structured writing and/or oral activities that can be used with materials already available in the classroom. The prescriptions encourage students to react holistically to a reading selection and to incorporate within the activities their own ideas, experiences, perceptions and feelings. The

program also offers a checklist that can be used in conjunction with formal and informal diagnosis to list and establish a priority ranking of pupil needs on a class, group and individual basis. This checklist becomes an ongoing record of pupil achievement and accompanies the student as he or she proceeds through the grades.

The New Jersey Writing Project -- South Brunswick, New Jersey: A teacher training program that improves student writing for grades 7-12. The New Jersey Writing Project is a statewide writing program based on a thorough knowledge of the composing process. This project is predicated on the following assumptions: writing is a process and a mode of learning; teachers of writing should write; teachers teaching teachers accomplishes efficient curriculum change; theory about and assessment of writing should enhance classroom practices. The program involves three stages: teacher training, implementation and staff development and assessment. The teacher training stage is a three-week summer institute for teachers from multiple districts in the same geographic region. This is a nationally validated program.

Writing Into Reading -- West Windsor-Plainsboro, New Jersey: Project Writing Into Reading is an integrated reading and writing program developed by and for students of all ability levels in grades 9-12. Project materials include actual samples of how high school students write, an examination of the writing process to improve writing skills, strategies for using the writing experience to improve students' reading comprehension, samples of writing across the curriculum, writing and reading exercises for classroom use, student interviews and evaluation procedures. Recognizing the paucity of materials in this field of study, particularly in the study of the process of writing, the program provides a textbook for improving reading and writing, a teacher's guide, and a teacher-training component for effective curriculum planning. This is a state validated program. National validation is pending.

Ferguson-Florissant Writing Project -- Ferguson, Missouri: A nationally validated program for grades 4-12 designed to increase student achievement in writing through an intensive teacher inservice program. The inservice program includes surveying the current research on effective teacher methodologies, developing the teachers' skills as writers, and learning a four-stage writing process; prewriting, composing, revising and evaluating. Students of teachers who have participated in this program have demonstrated significantly better writing skills.

The dissemination of validated programs is coordinated by:

Sarah Banks
National Diffusion Network State Facilitators
New Jersey State Department of Education
609-984-7300

APPENDIX D

.WRITING TOPICS: SOURCE
.EXAMPLES OF PROMPTS (TOPICS)

WRITING TOPICS

The following sample writing topics (prompts) have been used by other state or national test agencies to assess student's ability to communicate in writing. The topics may be used with students as is or with some modification. Other resources for acquiring additional topics follow.

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress
Education Commission of the States
Suite 700, 1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80295

1. Pretend that when you got up this morning, you looked out the window and saw that it was raining. How did you feel?

   Think for a while about the feelings you have on a rainy morning. Then write a composition telling how a rainy school morning makes you feel.

2. Pretend that you are a pair of tennis shoes. You've done all kinds of things with your owner in all kinds of weather. Now you are being picked up again by your owner. Tell what you, as the tennis shoes, think about what's going to happen to you. Tell how you feel about your owner.

3. Imagine that your principal asked for suggestions about how to make things better in your school. White a letter to your principal telling just ONE thing you think should be changed, how to bring about the change, and how the school will be improved by it.

4. Everybody knows or can imagine what it is like to lose something or someone of special importance. Valuable things may be lost or broken, close friends or relatives may die or move away, favorite pets may be lost or killed.

   Think of some loss you have experienced. Tell what you especially remember about what you lost, and how it feels to experience such a loss.

5. Pretend that one of your classmates has hurt his leg and will have to stay at home for a long time. Your class would like to cheer him up. You have decided to write him a letter. Write the kind of letter you think he would be happy to get.

6. One of the things you do in school is to write reports for science, social studies and other subjects. Imagine that you are going to write a report about the moon for your science class. Listed below are some facts about the moon which you can use in your report. You may also add other facts that you remember about the moon from your reading and classwork, from television, or from listening to people.

   Write your report as you would tell it to your class. Be sure to report the facts in an order that will be clear and that will makes sense to your classmates.

FACTS ABOUT THE MOON

Made of rock
Mountainous, contains craters
Covered with dust
No air or water
No plant or animal life

7. Don't forget your students as a source of information. Ask students to suggest other topics they would be interested in writing about.

APPENDIX E

RESOURCE: PRESENTERS/SPEAKERS

RESOURCE: PRESENTERS/SPEAKERS

The following individuals are either Test Development Committee Members or educators who are willing to offer some of their professional time to assist you in your in-service project. Please note: These people have agreed to share their expertise, however, their own professional commitments may limit their availability.

County	Name	Business Address/Phone
Burlington	Nancy Broz	William Allen Middle School North Stanwick Road Moorestown, New Jersey 08057 (609) 235-4000
Somerset	Dr. John Casey	Bridgewater-Raritan High School High School West Garretson Road Bridgewater, New Jersey 08869 (201) 722-1500 x-546
EIC-South	Billie Chambers	Educational Improvement Center-South Route 47 Sewell, New Jersey 08080 (609) 228-6000
Camden	Dr. Miriam Chaplin	Rutgers University 311 North 5th Street Camden, New Jersey 08102 (609) 757-6106
Middlesex	Joanne Frank	School Program Coordinator Middlesex County Office New Brunswick, New Jersey 08801 (201) 745-3290
Burlington	F. Lynn Galbraith	Lenape Regional High School Church & Hartford Roads Medford, New Jersey 08055 (609) 654-5111
Middlesex	Marcia Holtzman	596 Middlesex Avenue Metuchen, New Jersey 07450 (201) 549-4200
Middlesex	V. Peter Jurjevich	Woodbridge Township Board of Education Colonia Senior High School East Street Colonia, New Jersey 07067 (201) 382-5050

County	Name	Business Address/Phone
Bergen	Dr. Donald Maiocco	Ridgewood Village Public Schools 49 Cottage Place Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450 (201) 444-9600
Camden	Dr. John O'Breza President, NJCTE	Cherry Hill Township Public Schools Cherry Hill-East High School Kresson Road Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08003 (609) 424-2222
Mercer	Martha Palmere	West Windsor-Plainsboro High School 346 Clarksville Road Princeton Junction, New Jersey 08550 (609) 799-3200
Middlesex	Dr. William Walling	Rutgers University Highland Park/New Brunswick 018 Murray Hall New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903 (201) 932-7720
Available to All Counties	Diane Braungart	Coordinator State Testing Program 225 West State Street Trenton, New Jersey 08625 (609) 292-1532

APPENDIX F

RESOURCE: ORGANIZATIONS AND MATERIALS

RESOURCE: ORGANIZATIONS & MATERIALS

Contact the person or office indicated for further information on available materials and possible personal assistance. This resource list is not intended to be inclusive or even representative; it simply offers a point of initial contact for those seeking assistance.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM
College Outcome Measures Project (COMP)
P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, IA 52243
Telephone: 319-337-1120
Contact: Joe M. Steele

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic and analytical assessment; developing and using objective tests; training teachers in classroom use; writing assessment research; psychometric evaluation; providing national norms on writing proficiency. Levels of experience: Postsecondary and adult

Writing Assessment Expertise

The College Outcome Measures Project has been involved in developing and assessing writing samples and developing objective proxy measures of writing proficiency. COMP staff have worked with over 130 postsecondary institutions in assessing writing samples.

BAY AREA WRITING PROJECT
National Writing Project
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley, California 94720
Telephone: 415-642-4544
Contact: Miles Myers or Catherine Lucas Keech

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic assessments; training teachers in classroom use; using post-holistic feature analysis. Levels of experience: Elementary, secondary and postsecondary

Writing Assessment Expertise:

Since 1974 the Bay Area Writing Project has provided various programs to improve the writing preparation of all students, elementary through university. Project staff members offer inservice training on holistic writing assessment methods and also have designed, developed and piloted post-holistic feature analysis methods which are particularly appropriate for minimum competency and diagnostic testing.

CEMREL, INC.
3120 59th Street
St. Louis, MO 63139
Telephone: 314-781-2900
Contact: Dennis Verity

Technical Assistance Capabilities

Planning and conducting primary trait assessments; training teachers in classroom research. Levels of experience: Elementary

Writing Assessment Expertise:

CEMREL staff have been involved in developing guidelines for the use of primary trait scoring by classroom teachers. Their first in a series of guidebooks on assessing expressive writing is titled Composing Childhood Experience: An Approach to Writing and Learning in the Elementary Grades. Staff members are available to recommend consultants in writing assessment in the Midwest.

COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION (CBE)
725 Fifteenth Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: 202-347-4171
Contact: A. Graham Down

CBE publishes occasional papers, a number of books related to basic education and Basic Education, a phamphlet issued 10 times a year. Their efforts are directed to strengthening the basic subjects in schools including English, math, science, history, geography, government, foreign language and the arts.

EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE
Programs for the Assessment of Writing
Princeton, New Jersey 08541
Telephone: 609-734-5554
Contact: Evans Alloway or Susan Kaufman

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic and analytical writing assessments; developing and using objective tests; training teachers in classroom use; writing assessment reaserch; psychometric evaluations; dealing with the uses and constraints of writing assessment. Levels of experience: Elementary, secondary, postsecondary and adult.

Writing Assessment Expertise:

Staff members provide consulting and instructional services to assist in developing standards for assessing writing, measuring writing skills and evaluating programs designed to improve those skills. Staff have been

involved in training and conducting numerous state and district assessments in Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico and Massachusetts. Workshops and seminars available from ETS cover the uses of writing evaluation, holistic evaluation of writing and developing standards and criteria for describing performance.

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS
National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801
Telephone: 217-328-3870
Contact: Anne Auten

This ERIC Clearinghouse acquires, abstracts, indexes and disseminates information relating to reading, English and communication skills, preschool through college. Services include booklets, bibliographies, information analysis products, workshops and information searches. Especially for educators, ERIC has produced ERIC Documents on the Teaching of Writing, 1966-1981 ($7.50 NCTE member and $8.50 non-member).

HIGH/SCOPE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Telephone: 313-485-2000
Contact: James Bond and Robert Matz

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic, analytical and primary/multiple trait assessments; training teachers in classroom use; writing assessment research; developing formative evaluation systems. Levels of experience: Elementary

Writing Assessment Experience:

High/Scope staff has been involved in developing and evaluating numerous methods for assessing the development of writing skills in early and upper elementary grades. They also have conducted technical and methodological research on instruments and have conducted writing assessments including training readers and analyzing data.

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION (IRA)
800 Barksdale Road
P.O. Box 8139
Newark, Delaware 19711
Telephone: 302-731-1600
Contact: Drew Cassidy

The International Reading Association maintains a national network for informing its 60,000 members. Four professional journals, publications and information services are available to members and, on a limited basis, to nonmembers. Publications catalog available upon request.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)
1860 Lincoln Street
Suite 700
Denver, Colorado 80295
Telephone: 303-861-4917
Contact: Beverly Anderson, Director

NAEP is an education research project mandated by Congress to collect and report data over time. NAEP measures growth and decline and makes data available on the educational knowledge, skill, understanding and attitudes of selected groups of young Americans aged 9, 13, 17 and 26-35. Assessments are conducted in the following subjects: science, writing, reading, citizenship, literature, music, social studies, mathematics, career and occupational development and art.

NOTE: After July 1, 1983, contact Educational Testing Service (ETS).
Director: Archie La Pointe
Telephone: 609-921-9000

NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEMS (NES)
30 Gatehouse Road
Amherst, MA 01002
Telephone: 413-256-0444
Contact: William Gorth

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic, analytical, primary trait and mechanics assessments; developing and using objective tests; writing assessment research; psychometric evaluations. Levels of experience: Elementary and secondary

Writing Assessment Expertise:

NES has developed and conducted writing assessments in the Maine Assessment of Basic Skills; Connecticut 9th Grade Proficiency Testing Program; Massachusetts Assessment of Basic Skills and the Hawaii Foundations Program. Staff is available to develop and conduct both direct and indirect assessments of writing proficiency.

NATIONAL HUMANITIES FACULTY
1735 Lowergate Drive
Atlanta, Georgia 30322
Telephone: 404-329-5788

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (NIE)
Room 822
1200 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC. 20208
Contact: Dr. Larry Rudner Lawrence
Telephone: 202-254-7634

NORTHEAST REGIONAL EXCHANGE
101 Mill Road
Chelmsford, MA 01824
Telephone: 617-256-3987
Contact: Douglas S. Fleming

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc., (NEREX, Inc.) is a service agency that seeks to promote educational equity and improvement by coordinating resources and sharing information among the seven states of the Northeast based on an established set of state and regional priorities. By providing information, technical assistance, and training, NEREX, Inc. serves local school districts, intermediate service agencies, and other organizations with a vested interest in the improvement of education for children and adults. The Northeast Regional Exchange works collaboratively with other regional and national research, development and service organizations by linking with existing educational networks to increase services of those organizations within the region.

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc. specifically focuses on three regional priorities. These priorities are:

Curriculum:	Basic Skills - Writing Mathematics and Science
Instructional Technology:	Computer Technology and Software
Leadership:	Current Issues in Teaching Effective Schools

Some of the products of the Exchange include:

."Administering Writing Programs: A Workshop Leader's Handbook"

."Teachers Writing to Teachers: Writing As A Way of Observing, Learning and Teaching"

."Writing to Learn: A Resource Notebook for Teachers"

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATION LABORATORY 300 Southwest Sixth Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97204
Telephone: 503-248-6800
Contact: Richard Stiggens or Jerry Kirkpatrick

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting holistic, analytical and primary trait assessments; developing and using objective tests; training teachers in classroom use; writing assessment research; psychometric evaluations. Levels of experience: Elementary, secondary and postsecondary.

Prepares interrelated publications on the assessment of writing proficiency to aid educators at various levels in dealing with both large-scale and small-scale writing assessment. Documents are prepared by the Clearinghouse for Applied Performance Testing (CAPT).

RESEARCH FOR BETTER SCHOOLS (RBS)
444 North 3rd Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19123
215-574-9300
Contact: Publications Office

The Basic Skills Component of RBS assists educators in developing and implementing classroom processes that lead to student achievement in mathematics and language arts. RBS has developed individualized programs in math, reading and spelling.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LAB(SWRL) FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, California 90720
Telephone: 213-598-7661
Contact: R. James Mineo, Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance Capabilities:

Planning and conducting direct writing assessments; developing and using objective tests; writing assessment research; psychometric evaluations.
Levels of experience: Elementary

SWRL has produced instructional materials for the basic skills at kindergarten, primary and intermediate levels based on current research of how, what and why children learn. The materials are designed to be used in establishing a single learning center for the entire school or as several learning centers according to grades or classrooms.

WISCONSIN CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Telephone: 608-263-4200
Contact: Larry Weber, Information Specialist

This center is a research organization which focuses on student diversity in grades K-12. Four research teams: Learning and Development, Classroom Processes, School Administration and Education Policy address on individual/group basis, cultural, linguistic, gender and ability differences of students. Student diversity is reviewed with respect to language arts, math, micro-computers and secondary schooling.

APPENDIX G

RESOURCE: PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The following list of publications describe materials which focus on the teaching of writing as a process and the roles of educator and student within the context of a writing program. The synthesized list of publishers and publications is provided as a resource for your convenience and does not constitute an endorsement by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

EVALUATING COMPOSITION INSTRUCTION

The Evaluation of Composition Instruction synthesizes the results of almost four years of effort to evaluate composition instruction in general, and, in particular, the Bay Area Writing Project, a large-scale professional development program for composition teachers. In this new handbook, authors Barbara Davis, Michael Scriven and Susan Thomas provide assistance in evaluating single courses or whole programs of composition instruction. They investigate not only student writing performance, but also study the process of teaching writing, the context of composition instruction and important aspects of program support such as faculty development.

The guide provides a great deal of practical information about procedures and instruments that can help teachers, administrators and professional evaluators. It covers basic evaluation concepts, aspects of composition instruction and evaluation components. It is organized to provide easy access to information on designing and conducting a quality evaluation.

The book, a valuable resource is available for $7.50 from EDGEPRESS, P.O. Box 69, Point Reyes, California 94956.

****

Paperback: If You're Trying to Teach Kids How to Write, You've Gotta Have This Book!

Author: Marge Frank
Publisher: Incentive Publications
Copyright: 1979

Cost: $8.95 Application: Grades 2 and up.

****

NEWSLETTER COPY

Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc.
101 Mill Road
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Contact: Douglas S. Fleming
Day: 617-256-3987
Night: 617-582-4631

The Northeast Regional Exchange is pleased to announce the publication of Understanding Writing: Ways of Observing, Learning, and Teaching. Edited by Thomas Newkirk of the New Hampshire Writing Program and Nancie Atwell of the Boothbay Writing Project, Understanding Writing is a collection of articles written by teachers for teachers of grades K-8.

Rather than merely sharing writing exercises and activities, the authors, as the subtitle indicates, act as learners, observers and teachers. Each of their articles provides careful observations and illustrations of how writers write and learn to write. Each details the role of the teacher in discovering and supporting students' writing processes and growth. And each captures the excitement of teaching when children's ideas, intentions, and ways of learning are at the heart of a writing program.

The twenty articles are grouped as five sections. Primary-level teachers examine writing in the early grades: how writing begins and how teachers can help beginning writers. A section dealing with conferences explores ways teachers can talk with students about their thinking and writing. A third group of authors makes important connections between writing and reading, showing how young readers' comprehension and interpretive skills improve when writing and reading are taught together. Evaluation, long the bane of writing teachers, is addressed in three articles describing the use of writing folders in assessing students' growth. Finally, several contributors reflect on their own learning and its relation to their teaching, showing how teachers' first-hand experiences as writers and learners transform their practices and perspectives.

Understanding Writing: Ways of Observing, Learning, and Teaching is available through NEREX, Inc. at a cost of $5.95 plus $1.00 shipping and handling per single copy. Orders for ten or more copies are provided a discount, with shipping and handling abosrbed by NEREX, Inc. Although its primary audience is classroom teachers, the editors and NEREX, Inc. feel that administrators, curriculum coordinators, and language arts consultants will also respond to the invitation extended by the authors of Understanding Writing -- an invitation to consider how writing is learned and might best be taught.

Prewriting

A GUIDE TO TEACHING THE WRITING PROCESS FROM PRE-WRITING TO EDITING. Edited by Marjorie Smelstor. 1978. 45p. Contains suggestions for activities to use in teaching the three stages of the composing process: prewriting, writing, and postwriting. Discusses the steps involved in the three stages, research findings on the composing process, and pertinent student needs and instructional goals. Describes learning activities for the prewriting stage, for the writing stage, and for editing and suggests specific writing activities for use in the content areas of science, social studies, mathematics, English, fine arts, home economics, and business. Concludes with lists of suggested teacher resources. (ED 176 274. EDRS price codes: MF01 PC02, plus postage)

THE ONLY "PRE-WRITING" THAT COUNTS–MOTIVATION. By Laurence Behrens. 1978. 9p. Contends that the role of the composition teacher is to help students learn by having them write, and that motivation is a crucial preparatory step in writing where the teacher can be of most assistance. Suggests a variety of role-playing tactics that can be used in a composition class to help the students prepare to write, all of which require some awareness of the motive of the writer and of the audience. (ED 161 039; EDRS price codes: MF01 PC01, plus postage)

THE RHETORICAL TRIANGLE AS DIRECTION FINDER IN THE COMPOSING PROCESS. By William F. Woods. 1976. 12p. Proposes that one of the most useful models of the composing process is derived from an interpretation of the rhetorical triangle. Notes that this model not only implies the relationship between the writer's subject, background, and audience, but also points to the specific writing functions that underlie these terms. Concludes that the rhetorical triangle provides a conceptual frame for planning an essay and, in a very important sense, is a direction finder, orienting students toward their goals as writers. (ED 144 056; EDRS price codes: MF01 PC01, plus postage)

CULTURAL HEURISTICS: TOPICS OF INVENTION BASED ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR. By James M. DeGeorge and Harold E. Nugent. 1979. 9p. Suggests that heuristics can be a valuable technique for helping beginning writers generate writing ideas. Proposes that students become familiar with Edward Hall's Primary Message Systems (PMS), a framework of ten anthropological modes that can be adapted to produce new connections latent in a subject matter, as a means of probing their imaginations to extract concrete subject matter for their compositions. Argues that when students find that certain PMS generate more information than others, they can concentrate on these particular PMS to make hybred questions for generating more specific information, focusing attention on particular topics, or eliciting unique approaches to traditional topics. Concludes that PMS is a prewriting activity that should help students collect a great deal of writing material. (CS 205 183; EDRS price codes: MF01 PC01, plus postage)

WRITE BEFORE WRITING. By Donald M. Murray. 1978. 13p. Suggests that students who are not writing or not writing well should be informed of the importance of prewriting. Notes that most writers need time for ideas to develop and in this preparatory stage, they feel four pressures that move them forward: increasing information, increasing concern, a waiting audience, and an approaching deadline. Contends that it is during this stage that experienced writers perceive signals that tell them how to control a subject to produce a working first draft. Identifies these signals as: genre, point of view, voice, news, line, image, pattern, and problem. (ED 157 094; EDRS price codes: MF01 PC01, plus postage)

The items listed above are among the many indexed in the ERIC system that deal with prewriting. All are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) in either microfiche (MF) or paper copy (PC). For tables giving the postal rates and translating the price codes into current prices, consult the most recent issue of *Resources in Education* (RIE), or the leaflet "Ordering Information for ERIC/RCS Minibibliographies," available from ERIC/RCS. Orders, together with proper payment, should be sent to EDRS, Computer Microfilm International Corporation, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

For further information on this and related topics, consult the pages of ERIC's *Resources in Education* (RIE) and *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE), or contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills.

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ERIC

Two important new resources are now available to help you more accurately assess student writing skills so you can effectively plan for improving students' writing.

In **Classroom Applications of Writing Assessment: A Teacher's Handbook** you are introduced to three popular and thoroughly developed composition rating techniques—holistic, analytical, and primary trait scoring—each a valuable method for accurately assessing student writing skills. Written in an understandable and enjoyable style, the handbook's practical assessment methods can help you be more effective and skillful in evaluating students' writing ability and in designing effective learning activities to teach basic writing skills.

Carefully field-tested with teachers across all grade levels, this guide will give you:

- *clear descriptions and practical experience in scoring student papers using holistic, analytical and primary trait scoring*
- *straightforward criteria for assigning sample scores—a chance to sharpen your own assessment skills*
- *comparisons of available scoring methods—a help in selecting the best method to meet your needs*
- *practical instructional activities you can use to involve students in the scoring process, thus helping them develop sharper writing skills*
- *an individualized study guide which also includes suggested workshop agendas making it an ideal resource for workshops on assessing student writing*

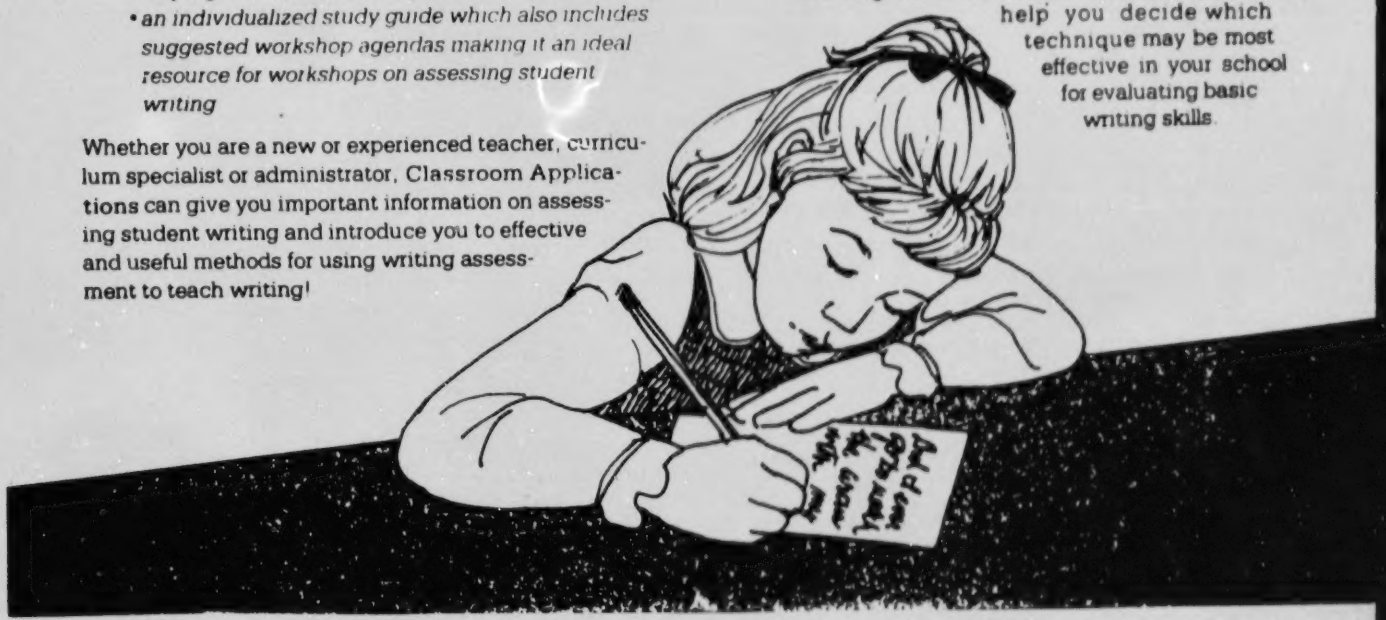
Whether you are a new or experienced teacher, curriculum specialist or administrator, Classroom Applications can give you important information on assessing student writing and introduce you to effective and useful methods for using writing assessment to teach writing!

If you're interested in understanding effective new ways to assess student writing, then **Direct Measures of Writing Skill: Issues and Applications** is an important resource for you. Written for the educator who wants to know about the latest methods to determine accurately and systematically student writing proficiency, this up-to-date publication offers a succinct and thorough overview of well-developed techniques for assessing students' writing skills.

In **Direct Measures** you will discover:

- *why more states and large-city assessments are relying on assessments of writing samples rather than objective language arts tests to evaluate student writing proficiency*
- *how holistic, analytical, primary trait and T-unit analysis scoring methods help determine students' writing proficiency*
- *how each assessment method compares with other options in respect to - what it offers, how long it takes, costs, and what training is required*
- *what steps are necessary in planning and conducting a high quality writing assessment*
- *how 24 states and 20 urban school districts are using various assessment approaches to determine their students' writing proficiency*

This concise, well written monograph will give you all the basic information needed for understanding these new assessment approaches and help you decide which technique may be most effective in your school for evaluating basic writing skills.



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WRITING:
Teachers and Children at Work
DONALD H. GRAVES

Donald Graves has been studying writing and the writing process since 1972, and is known throughout the English-speaking world for his studies of how children learn to write. Until now his work has been published only in articles and research reports, and articles have been written about him in *Psychology Today*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *Time*. With **WRITING: Teachers and Children at Work**, Graves presents the results of his experiences in an elegantly written book for teachers, administrators, researchers, and parents.

Much of this book is based on Graves' recent three-year study of children's writing. Data from that study show how young writers develop and how teachers can foster that development in the classroom. How children deal with spelling, handwriting, and revision, how they can use the writing converence, how they choose and organize topics are among the subjects discussed. Readers meet real teachers organizing their classrooms, conferring with children, meeting with parents and administrators. Most important, readers will discover real children in the midst of learning to write.

Contents:

I - START TO TEACH WRITING: Learn The Twin Crafts of Writing and Teaching. Survive Day One. Help Children Choose Topics. Organize The Classroom For Writing. Write With The Children. Publish Writing in The Classroom. Surround The Children With Literature. Make The School Day Encourage Writing. Answers to The Toughest Questions Teachers Ask About Writing.

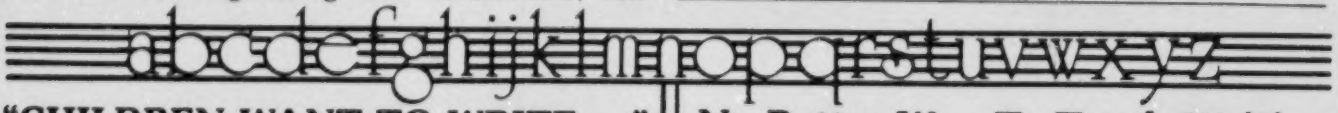
II - MAKE THE WRITING CONFERENCE WORK: Help Children Speak First. Ask Questions That Teach. Let The Children Teach Us. Work With Children at Different Draft Stages. Anwers to The Toughest Questions Teachers Ask About Conferences.

III - HELP CHILDREN LEARN THE SKILLS THEY NEED: How to Revise for Meaning. How to Listen for Voice. How to Keep Handwriting in Perspective. How to Spell to Communicate. How to Help Children Catch Up. How to Help Children With Special Problems of Potential.

IV - UNDERSTAND HOW CHILDREN DEVELOP AS WRITERS: See The Writing Process Develop. See Writers Develop. Make Development Clear. Keep Development in Perspective. Accept The Extremes of Change. Adjust to The Changing Writer.

V - DOCUMENT CHILDREN'S WRITING DEVELOPMENT: Observe How Your Children Develop as Writers. Record Each Child's Development. Share The Children's Development with Administrators and Parents.

1982	312pp	Paperback	08203	**$10.00** (U.S. funds)



"CHILDREN WANT TO WRITE..."
Donald Graves in Australia
edited by **R.D. Walshe**

This book of articles on Donald Graves' research on children's writing was published after his 1980 visit to Australia. We are pleased to make this available for the first time in North America. "Children want to write..." will provide excellent background reading to Graves' own book, described above.

Contents: Donald Graves in Australia - Reported by *R.D. Walshe*. 1. Patterns of Child Control of the Writing Process - *Donald H. Graves*. 2. The Researcher Who Watches Children Write - *Susan Sowers*. 3. KDS CN RIT SUNR THN WE THINGK - *Susan Sowers*. 4. Writing Taps a New Energy Source: The Child - *Lucy McCormick Calkins*. 5. What Children Show Us About Revision - *Donald H. Graves*. 6. Children Learn the Writer's Craft - *Lucy McCormick Calkins*. 7. One Child, One Teacher, One Classroom - *Barbara Kamler*. 8. When Children Want to Punctuate - *Lucy McCormick Calkins*. 9. Making Time for Writing - *Judith E. Egan*. 10. Who Says Children Can't Write the First Week? - *Mary Ellen Giacobbe*. 11. Revision: In Writer's Workshops and Classroom - *Donald H. Graves & Donald M. Murray*. Index.

1982	120pp	Illustrated	Paper	00565	**$6.00** (U.S. funds)

No Better Way To Teach Writing
edited by **Jan Turbill**

Here is an inspiring and exciting report on how 27 teachers in three Australian schools used the 'conference approach' to teach writing to their elementary pupils. The results were overwhelmingly successful both for the teachers and the children.

This 'case book' supplements Donald Graves' own work, and supplies valuable insights into the process of implementing his methods of teaching writing.

Contents

Foreword by Eric Flood. About This New Approach.

Part 1: The Conference Approach K-2

1. Launching the Conference Approach. 2. Getting Started. 3. Classroom Organization. 4. The Conference. 5. The Writing Time. 6. Publishing the Writing. 7. Programming and Evaluation. 8. 'Not Only Writing Improves...'

Part 2: In the Primary School

Introduction. 1. Launching the Conference Approach. 2. Getting Started. 3. Classroom Organization. 4. The Conference. 5. The Writing Time. 6. Publishing the Writing. 7. Programming and Evaluation. 8. 'Not Only Writing Improves...' Teachers and Schools of the St. George Project. Index.

1982	96pp	illustrated	Paper	00568	**$6.00** (U.S. funds)

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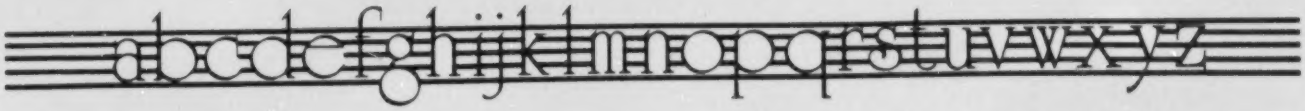

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For some years NCTE has been a leader in publishing materials on teaching composition and research in composition. The books listed here cover a variety of grade levels and several areas within composition. The letters *E, M, J, S,* and *C* indicate the most appropriate professional level: elementary, middle school, junior high, senior high, and college.

EIGHT APPROACHES TO TEACHING COMPOSITION

Timothy R. Donovan
and Ben W. McClelland, editors

Eight new essays focus on *process* and offer exciting course options for all teachers of college composition. The authors, all prominent names, share Donald M. Murray's premise in the opening essay that the process of "making meaning with written language cannot be understood by looking backward from a finished product." In each essay the theoretical approach is grounded in detailed description of a composition course informed by it. Because the authors are committed writers as well as writing teachers, the essays are vivid, graceful, and individual "final products" in the ongoing process of speculating about writing and its teaching. 160p. 1980. C.
No. 13036 $6.50 ($5.50, NCTE member price)

BASIC WRITING
Essays for Teachers, Researchers, and Administrators

Lawrence N. Kasden and Daniel R. Hoeber, editors

The ten essays collected here are of practical, as well as intrinsic value, since the demand for basic writing teachers is doubling and redoubling. Authored by top names in the field—Sondra Perl, E. Donald Hirsch, and Constance Gefvert among them—they address the whole spectrum of needs in this special area: those of the basic writer, of program design and evaluation, teacher-training, and research. Educators involved at all stages of program development will find helpful material here. 185p. 1980. C.
No. 02689 $9.50 ($7.75, NCTE member price)

A PROCEDURE FOR WRITING ASSESSMENT AND HOLISTIC SCORING

Miles Myers

This monograph by the Administrative Director of the Bay Area Writing Project serves those active at all levels in (1) explaining needs in Title I and Title IV applications, (2) defining minimum competency standards required by state law, (3) evaluating (and changing) writing programs, and (4) planning classroom instruction. Myers describes the route to a report assessing writing in a class, school, or district. Primary emphasis is on what works, and what practical difficulties to avoid. Holistic scoring is used to derive *group profiles.* Discussion covers writing assignments or "prompts," directions to students, procedures for group scoring sessions, and the resultant report. 71p. 1980 NCTE and ERIC/RCS. E.M.J.S.C.
No. 37261 $4.50 ($4.00, NCTE member price)

PERSPECTIVES ON WRITING IN GRADES 1—8

Shirley M. Haley-James, editor

The "over-arching purpose" of this monograph is to help teachers help children gain experience, confidence, and skill in writing. The editor reviews the literature of twentieth-century authorities, presents the successful programs and practices of experienced teachers at different elementary school levels, includes a description of the remarkable Grosse Pointe, Michigan, district-wide plan for evaluating student writing (based on holistic methods), and offers Donald Graves' new look at writing research. After enumerating the points good teachers—both elementary and middle school—have in common, Haley-James concludes: "Writing is an energizing goal that has become a passion for such teachers . . . they change their teaching as time passes because they pay attention to what works and does not work with their students." 129p. 1981.
No. 35196 $5.50 ($5.00, NCTE member price)

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING THE COMPOSITION PROCESS

Carl Koch and James M. Brazil

The authors present a resource book of practical, student-centered, and easily implemented group strategies for teaching the composition process. The book is divided into four sections of strategies: "The Comfort Zone" helps students overcome their fear of writing; "Prewriting" helps students generate topics for writing; "The Writing Stage" teaches students how to form and structure their ideas; and "The Postwriting Stage" helps students edit and proofread their writing. Specific instructions and variations are given for each strategy. Supplementary material (e.g., forms and sample papers) that may be used or adapted in employing the strategies is also included. Two appendixes suggest ways of constructively evaluating student writing. 108p. 1978. S.C.
No. 47518 $5.60 ($4.00, NCTE member price)

WHAT CAN I WRITE ABOUT?
7,000 Topics for High School Students

David Powell

Powell provides junior and senior high school teachers with more than 7,000 writing topics, organized in chapters for twelve different categories of writing: comparison and contrast, definition, process, critical writing, research reports, description, etc. Each category is briefly introduced with a definition of the type of writing, notes on appropriate writing strategies, and suggestions for use of the book to locate topics. Subject headings under each category appeal to a comprehensive range of interests and experience. 111p. 1981. J.S.
No. 56568 $6.50 ($5.00, NCTE member price)

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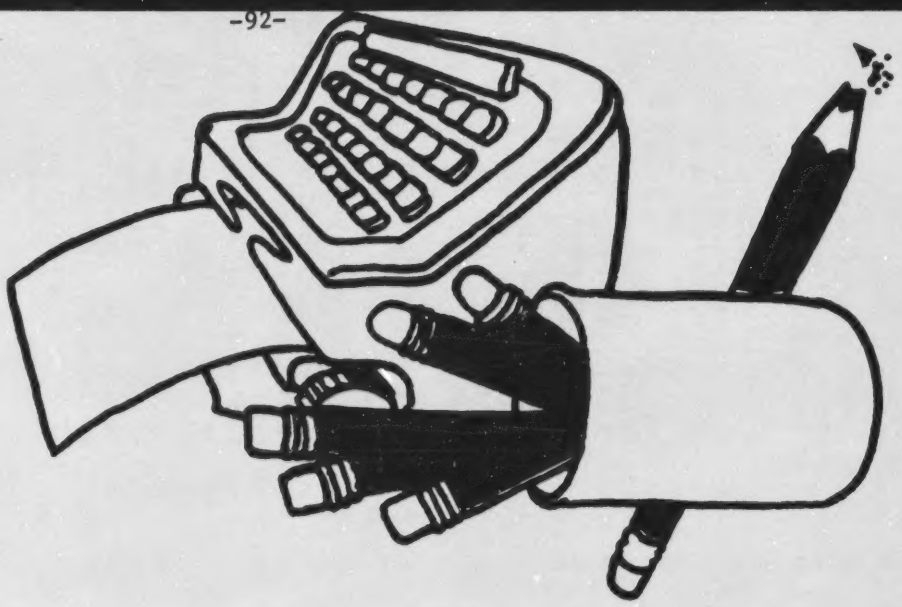

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Writing by Doing

Good writing requires practice and more practice. Through its emphasis on *doing*, *Writing by Doing* provides the opportunities students need to practice and grow as writers and, in the process, learn to write interesting, varied materials in different formats.

It's the Book That Gets Students Writing

Writing by Doing motivates with an unbeatable combination of high-interest activities, brief and effective instruction on specific skills, and an 8.0 reading level (Fry Scale) – all directed toward the goal of improving basic writing skills. The book is divided into two parts. *Part 1 – Let's Write!* is the writing text. *Part 2 – Language Skills Review* is a handy reference for reviewing and practicing mechanics, usage, and sentence structure. Together, the two parts of the book provide the motivation, instruction, and practice students need to improve their sentences, develop good paragraphs, and write effective essays.

Exciting Features That Help Students Write Better

Part 1 – Let's Write! Includes a variety of special features that help students develop skill and confidence in their writing.

- **Warm-Up and Check-Up**
  Each chapter begins with writing exercises to prepare students for the skills they will learn. Warm-up exercises allow students to try out writing skills *immediately* before instruction begins. Check-up exercises enable them to check themselves then try to improve.
- **Exercises and Activities**
  The exercises and writing activities in each chapter provide a variety of projects for practicing specific skills. Instruction is always brief and to the point with reinforcement through practice.
- **Examples**
  Each chapter is filled with short examples of good writing that illustrate the skill being taught.
- **Observation Notebook**
  Good writers are keen observers. With *Writing by Doing*, students keep an Observation Notebook to help them develop their awareness of the world and translate their observations into exciting, effective writing.
- **Photographs**
  Compelling photographs, many associated with writing activities, appear throughout the book to challenge students' imaginations and provide a stimulus for writing.

WRITING IN ACTION

This text, designed to improve the skills of self-expression in students follows a natural progression to build writing skills, beginning with autobiographical sketches and ending in essays of an expository and persuasive nature. The role of the teacher in using the text is that of guide and motivating spirit.

AUTHOR: Robert C. Meredith, Professor of English, Chicago State University

AUTHORS:

David A. Sohn, Language Arts Chairman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Laboratory School, Evanston, Illinois. Lecturer, Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, Illinois. He is the author of *Stop, Look and Write* with Hart D. Leavitt, *Pictures for Writing*, and several books on film. He is also the editor of *Ten Top Stones* and *Ten Modern American Short Stories*.

Edward Enger, full-time writer; former teacher and editor. He is the author of *Language Basics* and project editor of *Building Better English*.

Snap, Crackle & Write

Most educators will agree that, due to such influences as television, the telephone, and modern audio-visual methods of education, the average high school student of today is a much more communicating person than the student of a generation ago. Yet, because of these very influences, writing seems to be a communication method of last resort with teenagers; writing courses are far from the most popular in the high school curriculum. As a result, a great number of high school graduates come to the job market unable to organize and communicate even a simple message on paper.

Snap, Crackle & Write! answers the need for a text designed to overcome student aversion to writing.

Lively approach to the entire writing process, from perception and organization through research to the final product.

Exciting, employing many of the words and phrases used to communicate to and by today's generation.

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Interchapters contain selections of effective writing from contemporary professional writers for students to discuss and analyze.

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The Writing Process Is Used to Teach:

- Identifying elements of effective writing.
- Understanding the importance of planning in effective communication.
- Using comparison effectively.
- Using vocabulary with precision.
- Becoming familiar with the six steps of pre-writing.
- Understanding the importance of defining the audience.
- Writing an effective thesis statement.
- Using an outline to organize details.
- Identifying four different ways of gathering information.
- Applying the guidelines for a good opinion paragraph to writing.
- Reviewing the basic elements of grammar.
- Demonstrating effective use of strong, colorful verbs.
- Using adjectives imaginatively and effectively.
- Demonstrating originality through creative expression.
- Editing a piece of writing for clarity and conciseness.
- Understanding how to use the library for research.
- Becoming aware of techniques used to persuade.
- Recognizing that word choice can influence an audience.
- Identifying statements of fact or opinion.

AUTHOR:

Jeffrey Schrank, graduate of Notre Dame University, has taught high school English for many years in Chicago and St. Louis, and has served as an editor of *Media & Methods*. He is also the author of another outstanding text, *Understanding Modern Media*

SPECIAL FEATURES

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The LAIDLAW LANGUAGE PROGRAM organizes its grammar lessons for efficient teaching and skill mastery. By grouping related grammar lessons together within each chapter, The LAIDLAW LANGUAGE PROGRAM supplies an effective context for teaching and learning grammar. For example, in Book 5, Chapter 1 opens with a series of ten related grammar lessons on nouns and pronouns; Chapter 2 has eleven consecutive lessons on verbs, and so on. Teachers find it easier to teach grammar when the chapter organization allows them to concentrate their efforts and thoroughly develop a topic. Pupils find it easier to learn when they can develop and apply one skill at a time. Both teacher and pupil will profit by the many opportunities to apply, practice, review, and evaluate grammar skills.

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- Clear models of effective writing are provided—often by pupils themselves—so pupils can learn by example.
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- Pupils are taught how to revise, rewrite, and proofread in order to ensure quality in their finished writing products.

By such thorough attention to all aspects of writing, both practical and creative, The LAIDLAW LANGUAGE PROGRAM enables pupils to write with confidence and purpose.

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NEW

EVALUATING AND IMPROVING WRITTEN EXPRESSION: A Practical Guide for Teachers

by *Janice K. Hall*, Special Education Consultant

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8¼ x 11 Paperbound 212 pp.

TEACHING STUDY SKILLS: A Guide for Teachers

by *Thomas G. Devine*, University of Lowell

This comprehensive "how-to" book contains the strategies, methods, and specific guidelines to improve student study skills, not only in reading, but in ALL subject areas, like report writing, notetaking, homework, and the special skills needed in Social Studies, Math, Science, and Literature. Detailed skills lists, chapter overviews, reference sections, and Idea Boxes containing proven strategies for improving student study skills—in every area, at every level—are just some of the features that make this book a must for any teacher.

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A GUIDEBOOK FOR TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING, Second Edition

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This outstanding time- and effort-saving book is packed with 64 reproducible activities and scores of suggested group and individual exercises to plan a creative writing course, stimulate students to write, and analyze a piece of literary work. The wide-ranging activities reach students of all ability levels and the book includes up-to-date lists of instructional resources and examples of student writing.

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This practical guidebook is packed with over 350 pages of tips, techniques, and activities designed to help students develop clear, concise compositions. The activities are time-saving and reach students of all ability levels. This book includes up-dated and expanded lists of instructional resources, actual examples of student writing, and answer tables for all of the book's exercises.

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Provide practice in constructing stories using cause/effect and time/sequence patterns.

Content:
Story Starter has four different sequences: "Because," "When," "Then," and "Story Line." The program has three levels of difficulty, with 10 different opening lines for each level. The student provides the remainder of the content.

Key Features:
- Helps students understand cause/effect and effect/cause story patterns.
- Encourages and develops creative expression.
- Fosters writing skills and expression.
- A copy of the completed story can be printed and shared with teachers and parents.
- Several students can work as a team to create a story.

Teacher Support:
- Comprehensive Teacher's Manual includes information on how to use the program and present it to a class. Follow-up activities are also included.

A mix-and-match way for students to learn the essential components of sentences and stories.

STORY BUILDER

Created by Dr. Penny Gaither and Bertamax, Inc.

Purpose:
Provide a motivating activity to build knowledge of syntax and story components as well as comprehension skills.

Content:
Story Builder is based on a mix-and-match storybook format. It allows the student to experiment with sentence structure and create new and often funny story situations. Over 4,000 story combinations are possible.

Key Features:
- Emphasizes essential components of sentences/stories.
- Controlled vocabulary levels.
- Students can continuously reuse story sentences to see how changing one element affects the sentence.
- Abundant practice in a variety of reading situations.
- Rewarding motivational situation.

With Atari version:
- Students may create their own story endings—up to two full paragraphs—right on the computer keyboard.
- The full story may be printed out using the computer—so students can become their own publishers!

Teacher Support:
- Comprehensive Teacher's Manual includes simple directions for program use.

RANDOM HOUSE
SCHOOL DIVISION
Department 9062
400 Hahn Road
Westminster, Maryland 21157

Contents

Page

Introduction 1

BEGINNINGS

A Child Composes
Kathy Matthews 9

Labelling to Beginning Narrative
Judith Hilliker 13

The Rhythm of Writing Development
Ellen Blackburn 23

Beyond Storyland: Young Writers Can Tell It Other Ways
Sandra Bonin 31

Second-Graders Can So Write
Victor D'Ambrosio 36

Six Questions Teachers Ask About Invented Spelling
Susan Sowers 47

CONFERENCES

The Writer's Chart to Discovery
Joan Simmons 57

Letting Children Lead the Way
Sharron Cadieux 63

Squeezing From the Middle of the Tube
Susan Bridge 68

Reflect, Expand, Select: Three Responses in the Writing Conference
Susan Sowers 76

WRITING AND READING

The Write Way to Read
Paula Flemming 93

Writing and the Reading Response
Jack Callahan 101

Young Writers as Critical Readers
Thomas Newkirk 108

A Writer Reads, A Reader Writes
Mary Ellen Giacobbe 114

ASSESSMENT

Using Writing Folders to Document Student Progress
Anne Bingham 129

Making the Grade: Evaluating Writing in Conference
Nancie Atwell 137

The Bundle
Hesse K. Halley 145

REFLECTIONS

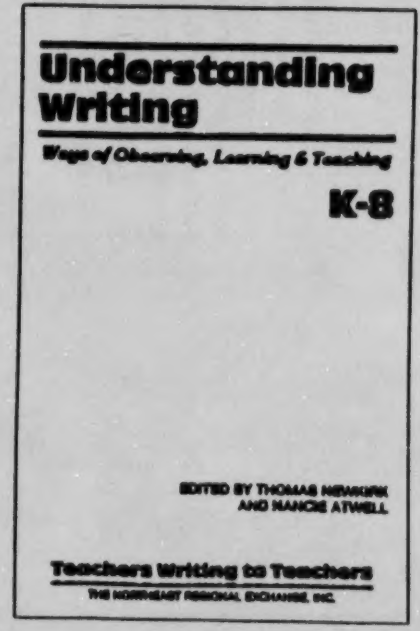
Time and the Taking of It
Deborah Sumner 155

Split Images: Teacher and Learner
Marna Bunce 161

Safety
Elizabeth Parillo 167

RESOURCES

Selected Bibliography on Writing and Its Teaching 173


Understanding Writing
Ways of Observing, Learning & Teaching
K-8
EDITED BY THOMAS NEWKIRK AND NANCIE ATWELL
Teachers Writing to Teachers
THE NORTHEAST REGIONAL EXCHANGE, INC.

-99-

Understanding Writing

Ways of Observing, Learning & Teaching

K-8

* is a book for all K-8 classroom teachers because it is written by classroom teachers. It contains articles on writing development, writing assessment, writing conferences, the relation of writing to drawing and reading, and more. In one important section teachers reflect on the connection between their own experiences as writers and those of their students.

This exciting collection provides immediately usable ideas on writing and a solid model of teacher as researcher.

EDITED BY THOMAS NEWKIRK AND NANCIE ATWELL

Teachers Writing to Teachers

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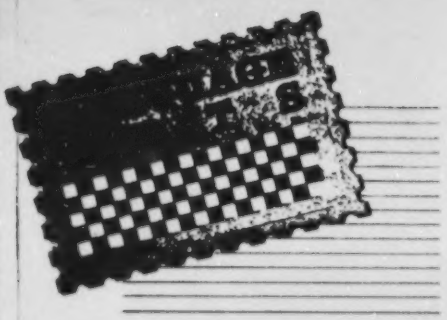


Gotalott Creative Writing Materials *by Marilyn Miner and students (Grades 4–8)*

What's a Gotalott book? It's a picture storybook for young children that's written and illustrated by your own intermediate and junior high students. In *Anatomy of a Gotalott Book*, you'll find step-by-step guidelines for producing books in class: how to get your students interested, supplies you'll need, how to plan the pages and put them all together. Three model books written and illustrated by 14-year-old students, *Casey the Caterpillar*, *Chicken and Mr. Worm*, and *Sniffy's Adventures*, demonstrate finished Gotalott books and inspire your students to put their own work in print.

DS04235 Set of 4 books **$14.50**

Writer's Checklist for Revising Your Paper *(Grades 6–12)*

Revision is a critical step of the writing process. Students need to learn that it means more than correcting errors and recopying in ink. It means standing back, being objective, looking for weaknesses, rethinking, trying different approaches. It's not easy, but it can be learned. This double-sided checklist offers a good starting place, with questions students can ask themselves about their papers. Seven sections cover purpose, main idea, structure, word choice, style, tone, and proofreading. Students can focus on single sections for successive drafts. A useful reference tool for peer editors and for teacher-student critique meetings. Class set of 35 checklists.

DS03310 **$4.95**

The Bookbinding Book *by Betty Doty (Teachers K–12)*

Have you ever wished you had a hand-bound, keepsake volume of your students' writing? Or maybe you have students who would be interested in learning firsthand how books are put together. This unique book/kit explains in simple steps, how to create your own permanently bound, cloth-covered books. Includes everything (except glue) needed to make a 5¾" × 4½" book—cloth for the cover, cardboard for covers and spine, needle and thread, waxed paper, and paper for the inside pages, precut and assembled in signatures. This could become an individual project for advanced students age 12 and older (not recommended for class projects). 127 pp.

DS04345 **$8.95**

Chapters: My Growth as a Writer *by Lois Duncan (Grades 6–12)*

If you teach English to secondary students, you've probably known a few who are really serious about writing and would even like to become professional writers. This autobiographical book can inspire and encourage those students. It's an engaging, personal look at one writer who began her career at a young age with her first success—a published story—at age 13. 263 pp. Hardback.

DS04344 **$10.95**

Bright Ideas Blank Storybooks *(Grades K–6)*

Any child is proud to say, "Look at the book I wrote!" The result will look almost professional when they use these blank books to showcase their own illustrated stories and poems. Each 6" × 9" book has 16 blank pages (8 sheets), bound like a child's paperback reader, with a plain cover that students decorate themselves.

DS07330 Set of 10 **$3.95**

Snapshot of My Brother and Other Writing Projects *by Russell Hill (Grades 7–12)*

Fourteen practical, fun-to-do writing projects with a common underlying theme: learn to look more closely at the world around you. In the title project, students learn how to write "snapshots," short descriptions that capture the essence, the mood, of people or places or times they have known. In other projects they practice using transitions, experiment with point of view, work to sharpen word choice, and learn the power of details.

Designed as a supplementary text for junior or senior high English or composition classes. *Snapshot* can be used weekly or biweekly for the regular writing practice that all students need. Includes many examples of student writing plus lots of encouragement to write from personal observations and experiences. Evocative black-and-white photos throughout. The **Teacher's Edition** contains all student projects, plus notes explaining how the author uses each project in his own classes.

DS03201	Student text, 90 pp.	$ 4.95
DS03202	Teacher's Edition, 112 pp.	$ 5.95
DS03203	Set of 10 student texts	$32.95

Writing: A Sourcebook of Exercises and Assignments *by D. Gunther, L. Marin, J. Maxwell, and J. Weiss (Grades 7–12)*

A collection of more than 50 well-tested exercises with emphasis on observation, organization, and style, plus techniques for writing the research paper and practice with simple analysis and argument. Each exercise is presented step-by-step with notes on preparation, a complete teaching plan, and ideas on what you can expect from your class. The wide variety of topics makes this book adaptable to any writing curriculum. Includes practical tips for coping with large numbers of student papers. Comes with pad of 40 blackline-master handouts. 222 pp.

DS04333 Book with masters **$14.60**

Listen to the Children *by V. B. Gaston and K. E. Shoemaker (Grades K–6)*

A result of the successful Grayland Avenue Elementary School Student Author Project, this richly illustrated handbook offers proven ideas for starting your own Young Authors project. A perfect companion to the Gotalott creative writing materials, this book gives you ideas for helping young children with book layout, uniquely shaped books, books in two languages, special types of art, book binding and printing, plus student contracts and certificates you can make. 102 pp.

DS04234 **$8.95**

Birdseye Writing Skills *by Jan Berman (Grades 4–6)*

Here's a great way to help your students write paragraphs, nonfiction essays and reports, and fiction stories. The activities provide the structure, your students brainstorm the ideas. Even your weakest writers will be able to put together a cohesive piece of writing as they follow the step-by-step directions on these pages. Topics include such kid-pleasers as the perfect pet, opinions about bedtime, a research report on chocolate and carob, and a visit to an alien spacecraft. Each book contains 48 reproducible blackline worksheets.

DS04213	Paragraph Writing	**$5.95**
DS04214	Nonfiction Writing	**$5.95**
DS04215	Fiction Writing	**$5.95**

Just Writing: Exercises to Improve Your Writing *by Bill Bernhardt (Teachers 6 and up)*

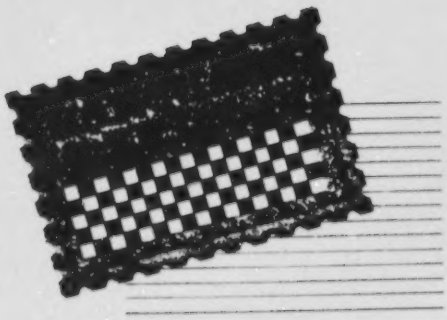
This exciting book for teachers and students cuts through the mysteries of the complex writing process as it initiates us, bit by bit, into the pleasures of putting pen to paper. It's like a workbook, with hundreds of short exercises that can turn anyone into a more fluent and more confident writer. Explores the connection between speech and writing, vocabulary expansion, thinking and writing quickly, learning how to *really* edit, understanding the "feel" of the English language, and tapping unconscious creativity. An invaluable resource for teachers of writing. 103 pp.

DS04334 **$6.00**

My Books for Writing *by Dina Anastasio (Grades 4–6)*

These story framework books are especially for those students who freeze when faced with a blank sheet of paper—enjoyable too for more proficient writers. Each page provides the structure for a story or personal narrative, with blanks left for students to fill in their own characters, events, and descriptions. One story begins, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were a television show all about me?" The student then completes sentences to fully detail this imaginary, personalized TV show. A practical way to encourage reluctant writers. More than 100 single-page compositions in this set of five books.

DS04330 Set of 5 **$8.75**



Clear and Lively Writing *by Priscilla Vail (Teachers K–12)*

A volume of rich, enjoyable language games to encourage fluency, flexibility, and originality in student writing. Old standbys like *Botticelli* and *Dictionary*, plus many inventive new games. Includes a year's calendar of writing ideas on monthly topics. 269 pp. Hardback.

DS04337 **$14.95**

Developing Skills in Capitalization and Punctuation *by Beverly Cory (Grades 3–8)*

For practice and review of writing mechanics, try these reproducible worksheets that place each skill in a meaningful and often amusing context. **Book A:** Students practice writing for a newspaper with Gertie Goose, Editor. **Book B:** Students write about a strange new planet and help the visiting Zinclings report about life on Earth. **Book C:** Students learn proofreading marks and apply them in wacky assignments that include writing fortune-cookie fortunes and a conversation with a Boston fern. 48 worksheets in each. Answers included.

Book A (grades 3–4)		
DS03101	Blackline masters	$ 6.95
DS03102	Spirit masters	$12.95
Book B (grades 5–6)		
DS03103	Blackline masters	$ 6.95
DS03104	Spirit masters	$12.95
Book C (grades 7–8)		
DS03105	Blackline masters	$ 6.95
DS03106	Spirit masters	$12.95

The Power of Creative Writing *by Bernard Percy (Teachers 3–12)*

A sensitive and thoughtful approach to working with young writers. Tells how to use criticism, evaluation, and editing effectively; what to do with students who don't *want* to write. Includes useful glossary of writing terms. 182 pp.

DS04339 **$4.95**

The Big Book of Writing Games and Activities *by S. Kaplan, S. Madsen, and B. Gould (Grades 3–6)*

Sample letterhead stationery for writing business letters. Fold-and-put-together models for writing step-by-step directions. Black and white photos for journalistic news stories. The attractive manipulatives in this resource book add a new dimension to the teaching of these skills: letter writing, reporting, prose and poetry, technical writing, advertising, journal writing. Ideas and props for 30 games and activities, plus 44 reproducible worksheets and 21 task cards. 78 pp.

DS04332 **$18.95**

Writing with Power *by Peter Elbow (Teachers 9 and up)*

Being in control, aware of what you're doing, not feeling stuck or helpless: this is writing with power. Practical tips for getting words on paper, revising, using reader feedback to improve a piece of writing. Elbow imparts his down-to-earth advice with flair. Useful for any writer or writing teacher. 384 pp.

DS04341 **$6.95**

Paper, Pen, and Think *(Grades 1–8)*

The little miracles that intrigue kids (snowflakes, stamps, telephones, leaves) can be used to inspire better student writing. Giving them a reason to write helps, too. Ten years of the best articles on writing (from *Instructor* and *Teacher* magazines) have been organized into this stimulating resource book. Hundreds of teacher-tested ideas, including more than 60 reproducible worksheets. 159 pp.

DS04331 **$9.95**

Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing *by Mina Shaughnessy (Teachers 9 and up)*

This informed, insightful study of writing behaviors lists problems commonly found in student compositions, their causes, and ways of overcoming them. A blend of educational theory and practical suggestions, with exercises to help you teach syntax, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. 311 pp.

DS04343 **$8.95**

The Writing Workshop *by Alan Ziegler (Teachers 3–12)*

Practical tips from a teacher, writer, and poet on how to turn your classroom into a writing workshop. Writing with enthusiasm and common sense, he explains his strategies for eliciting good writing from students and nurturing their growth as writers. Emphasis on free verse and expressive prose, with ideas applicable to essays as well. 143 pp.

DS04338 **$6.9[illegible]**

A Way With Words *by Thomas Whissen (Teachers 9 and up)*

This intriguing book encourages writers to experiment with different styles in order to develop their own personal style. Emphasis on developing an ear for language, hearing the rhythms of different styles. Exercises can be adapted for student use. 277 pp.

DS04340 **$6.95**

The ABCs of Literacy: A Guide for Parents and Educators *by Stephen Judy (Teachers 7–12)*

This widely acclaimed book discusses the issues behind the "literacy crisis" in our schools. Includes many sensible ideas for helping students with written language, both inside and outside your school's English program. 361 pp.

DS04342 **$6.95**

The Whole Word Catalog, Vols. 1 and 2 *(Teachers K–12)*

Stimulate creativity in your classroom with these popular companion volumes from the Teachers and Writers Collaborative. Both books contain a wealth of great ideas presented in clear how-to style, with warm and wonderful examples of student writing and bibliographies that make you want to read every book listed. No writing teacher should be without these two resources.

DS04335	Volume 1, 72 pp.	**$8.00**
DS04240	Volume 2, 352 pp.	**$8.95**

Helping Kids Write *by Sarah Bayne (Grades 5–8)*

This practical and readable guide offers lesson plans, lots of good composition topics and springboards to writing, ways to integrate grammar and spelling into your writing program, and ideas for regular editing meetings to eliminate the need for correcting and grading papers. 96 pp.

DS04336 **$5.00**

DALE SEYMOUR PUBLICATIONS
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September 1981

Language Arts

Reprinted by Nystrom from Curriculum Review

STEPS TO BETTER WRITING
Nystrom, 1980

Grade Level: 4-8

Content Emphasis

Steps to Better Writing introduces students in the middle grades to basic thinking and communication skills. Each of the three kits focuses on one particular style of writing. *Writing for Fun* helps students to write journals, poems, descriptions, stories, plays, and news items. *Writing to Explain* works with examples, meanings, comparisons, categorizations, illustrations, and explanations. *Writing a Report* discusses subjects, information gathering, bibliographies, outlining and note taking, first draft, and final paper. Each kit contains six filmstrips and cassettes, a teacher's guide which includes tape transcripts, and copymaster sheets.

Rationale

The rationale for this program is that writing is not an intuitive talent but a craft that can be taught—that with practice all students can acquire basic skills needed for clear communication. Students are encouraged to share their ideas and their work at every step. Teacher input is necessary at all stages, to expand on the text of cassettes and copymasters, lead discussion groups, and evaluate student writing.

Objectives

The program strives to illustrate literary forms; to encourage students to draw on their own experiences and express their feelings; and to provide opportunities for students to communicate ideas in writing. *Writing for Fun* stresses writing freely and using dialogue. *Writing to Explain* focuses on using detail to write examples that add interest and to write a definition that goes beyond dictionary meaning. *Writing a Report* helps students to understand the need for transitional phrases and to use bibliography cards.

Organization

The three kits may be used in consecutive years or as a concentrated writing course at one grade level. A six-week period of study is suggested for each kit. The teacher's guide recommends a class period of 30-45 minutes for each lesson. Lessons consist of a filmstrip, discussion, and follow-up activity. Copymasters provide writing exercises, and students then discuss their writing assignments.

Instructional Method

Suggested teaching procedures involve 4-6 steps for each unit. In general, the teacher shows the filmstrip and expands on it through the accompanying discussion questions. Then the teacher guides students' work with the copymaster sheet, which contains both practice work and writing assignments.

The teacher's manual suggests discussion questions, gives examples and elaborations, and offers hints for evaluation of student writing. Self-evaluation occurs as students discuss one another's work.

Physical Features

The filmstrips are especially attractive—realistic, colorful, and lively. The copymaster sheets (not ditto masters) are businesslike, with no illustrations or eye-catching gimmicks. Each kit includes a set of file cards for library cataloging.

Recommendations

Steps to Better Writing deserves high recommendation. Its strengths are many: the step-by-step approach, the focus on meaning and clarity in writing, the visual appeal to students, the concise yet meaningful suggestions to teachers, and the breakdown of skills into workable learning tasks. The teacher's guide, recognizing the limitations and potential of the classroom situation, poses realistic expectations for both student and teacher. The material accommodates varying student abilities. The program's only drawback is its price, but these materials will serve many students, and the likely improvement in their written communication will be well worth the cost of purchase.

Nancy Whitelaw, M.Ed.—Teacher, Sweet Home Central Schools, Amherst, New York.

ALSO

MEDIA REVIEW EVALUATION: (••••) (Recommended for Purchase Without Reservation) February, 1981

The producers of Writing for Fun deserve a hearty round of applause for this bright, fresh approach to the instruction of basic writing skills.

Steps To Better Writing Takes A Logical, Step-by-Step Approach To Writing.

frees teachers from the need to improvise their own writing program, by taking a simple and logical approach to writing as a series of skills that can be taught to all students.

At the heart of the learning units are the sound filmstrips, each of which delineates the start-to-finish processes by which students can begin and carry through to completion the writing task at hand.

After the viewing and the subsequent discussion, the teacher gives the students writing assignments similar to those detailed in the filmstrip. The teacher's guide and the copymasters furnish various kinds of help, including suggested topics. Now the students are ready to apply and develop the skills being taught in that particular lesson.

—the direct route to effective communication.

SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS
No. 2SBW400

Five sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Writing Sentences.
2. Kinds of Sentences.
3. Improving Sentences.
4. Writing Paragraphs.
5. Improving Paragraphs.

Sentences and Paragraphs deals with the basic units or building-blocks of composition, and develops the sentence- and paragraph-writing skills necessary in all forms of prose writing, whether creative or expository.

PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION
No. 2SBW500

Five sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Capital Letters.
2. End Punctuation.
3. Commas.
4. More About Commas.
5. Quotations.

Punctuation and Capitalization is concerned with the teaching of skills which when acquired and practiced become routine, facilitating the act of writing and making for natural clarity in the written communication.

EVERYDAY WRITING
No. 2SBW600

Five sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Messages.
2. Friendly Letters.
3. Formal Letters.
4. Book Reports.
5. Oral Reports.

Everyday Writing teaches composition skills that students frequently need both in school and at home, and it does so in the simple and engaging style that characterizes all the STEPS TO BETTER WRITING modules.

WRITING FOR FUN
No. 2SWB100

Six sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Keeping a Journal.
2. Writing a Poem.
3. Describing a Person.
4. Telling a Story.
5. Doing Plays and Skits.
6. Reporting the News

Writing for Fun introduces students to the pride and pleasure of expressing their thoughts and feelings creatively in writing of various formats, gaining confidence while sharing their experiences with other people.

WRITING TO EXPLAIN
No. 2SBW200

Six sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Using Examples.
2. Giving the Meaning.
3. Making Comparisons.
4. Dividing into Groups.
5. Showing How.
6. Explaining Why.

Writing to Explain develops skills of thinking analytically about information and the ways in which it is best received; defines, illustrates, and guides the student in the basic elements of expository writing.

WRITING A REPORT
No. 2SBW300

Six sound filmstrips with review- & activity-sheet copymasters, guide.

1. Choosing a Subject.
2. Gathering Information.
3. Preparing a Bibliography.
4. Outlining & Note-taking.
5. Writing the First Draft.
6. Doing the Final Paper.

Writing a Report directs students in the art and science of gleaning information from various sources and organizing it into the proper form for a report—writing and then rewriting for clarity and correctness.

The three five-filmstrip sets together (2SBW400/500/600) are 2SBW2000 at $475.00.
Individual 2SBW400, 500, 600: $170.00 each.

The three six-filmstrip sets together (2SBW100/200/300) are 2SBW1000 at $540.00.
Individual 2SBW100, 200, 300: $195.00 each.

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Phone: 312/463-1144

136

Prices F.O.B. Chicago

APPENDIX H

RESOURCE: PUBLISHERS THAT WELCOME STUDENT'S WRITING

25 MAGAZINES WHICH WELCOME CHILDREN'S WRITING AND ART WORK

American Girl. Girl Scouts of the USA, 830 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022. Single copy $.75 one-year subscription $5.95. (For girls 12-17)

Boys' Life. Boy Scouts of America, North Brunswick, New Jersey 08902. Single copy $.70, one-year subscription $7.20. (For boys 8-18).

Child Life. P.O. Box 567B. Indianapolis, Indiana 46206. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $7.95. (Ages to 14)

Children's Digest. P.O. Box 567B, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $7.95. (Ages 3-8)

Cricket. P.O. Box 100, LaSalle, Illinois 61301. Single copy $1.50, one-year subscription $15.00 (Ages 6-12).

Daisy. Girl Scouts of the USA. 830 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022. Single copy $.75, one-year subscription $5.95. (For girls up to 11)

Ebony Jr.. 820 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Single copy $.75, one-year subscription $7.00. (Ages 6-12).

Free Spirit. Box 803, Massillon, Ohio 44646. Single copy $1.00, one-year subscription $8.00. (Ages 12-18)

Highlights for Children. 803 Church Street, Honesdale, Pennsylvania 18431. Single copy $1.50, three-year subscription $24.95. (Ages 2-12)

Humpty Dumpty's Magazine. Parents' Magazine Enterprises, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017. Single copy $.95, one-year subscription $8.95. (Ages 3-7)

Jack and Jill. P.O. Box 567B, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $7.95. (Ages 5-12)

Junior Historian. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706. Each issue $.75. (Grade 6-8)

National Geographic World. National Geographic Society. 17th and M Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Single copy $.70, one-year subscription $5.85. (Ages 8 and up)

Owl. The Young Naturalist Foundation, 59 Front Street East, Toronto, Canada M5E 1B3. Single copy $.95, one-year subscription $7.00 plus $2.00 postage. (Ages 8-12)

Ranger Rick. National Wildlife Federation, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, Virginia 22180. Single copy $1.00, one-year subscription $7.00. (Ages 7-10)

Scholastic Writing Awards. 50 West 44th Street, New York, New York 10036. Free rule booklet.

Seventeen. 850 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022. Single copy $1.00, one-year subscription $10.50. (For girls 13-19)

Stone Soup. Children's Art Foundation, Box 83, Santa Cruz, California 95063. Single copy $2.00, one-year subscription $8.50. (Ages up to 12)

Texas Historian. The Texas Historical Association, 2/306 Richardson Hall, University Station, Austin, Texas 78712. Single copy $.75, one-year subscription $3.75. (High school age)

Wee Wisdom. Unity School of Christianity, Unity Village, MO 64065. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $4.00. (Ages to 13)

The Weewish Tree. The American Indian Historical Society, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, California 94117. Single copy $1.25, one-year subscription $6.50. (Ages 8-12)

The Yorker. The New York State Historical Association, Fenimore House, Cooperstown, New York 13326. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $2.00. (High school age)

Young Athlete. P.O. Box 513, Edmonds, Washington 98020. Single copy $1.25, one-year subscription $7.50. (Ages 10-20)

Young Miss. Parents' Magazine Enterprises, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017. Single copy $7.95. (Girls 13-17).

Young World. P.O. Box 567B, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206. Single copy $.50, one-year subscription $7.95. (Ages 10-14)

APPENDIX I

RESOURCE: ESPECIALLY FOR TEACHERS: ERIC DOCUMENTS ON THE TEACHING OF WRITING 1966-1981. TABLE OF CONTENTS. (TO ORDER, SEE ERIC APPENDIX F)

Especially for Teachers:

Documents

on the

Teaching of Writing

1966–1981

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills
1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONCERNS ABOUT PROCESS
—methods for improving writing instruction

Prewriting Stage
—techniques for preparing to write

Stimuli 1
Warming Up 4
Inquiry 7

The Writers Repertoire
—strategies that help produce effective writing, given particular purposes and audiences

Modes of Discourse
Informative Writing
General 11
News Writing 12
Book Reports 12
Technical Writing 13
Persuasive Writing 17
Literary Writing
Fiction, Autobiography, Journals 18
Poetry 21
Specific Strategies
Sentence Combining 23
Vocabulary Development 26

Varying the Audience
—materials for helping students think about the audiences for whom they write

Audience Awareness 27
Teacher Feedback 30
Peer Feedback 31
Publishing Student Writing 33
Writing for the World of Work 34

Knowledge about the Composing Process
—methods that lead students to awareness of their own composing processes

Process as a Whole 39
Writing Apprehension 41
Environmental Factors 43
Writing as Learning 45
Writing Centers 46
Individualized Instruction 49

Revision and Proofreading
—strategies for both changing controlling generalizations and correcting usage errors

Substance, Mode, or Style 53
Standard Usage, Grammar, Spelling 57

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCERNS
—strengths and weaknesses of students and programs

Developmental/Remedial Writing
Secondary 61
Higher Education 63

Gifted Writers 69

Computers and Writing 71

Writing in the Content Areas 75

Integrating Reading and Writing 81

Evaluating Writing 85

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS
—materials for teacher and program development

Theory and Research on Writing 93

Teacher Preparation 97

Curriculum Guides and Course Descriptions
Elementary 101
Junior High 103
Secondary 104
K-12 107
Higher Education 108

Collections of Journal Articles 113

Subject Index 119

Author Index 163

Ordering ERIC Documents 175

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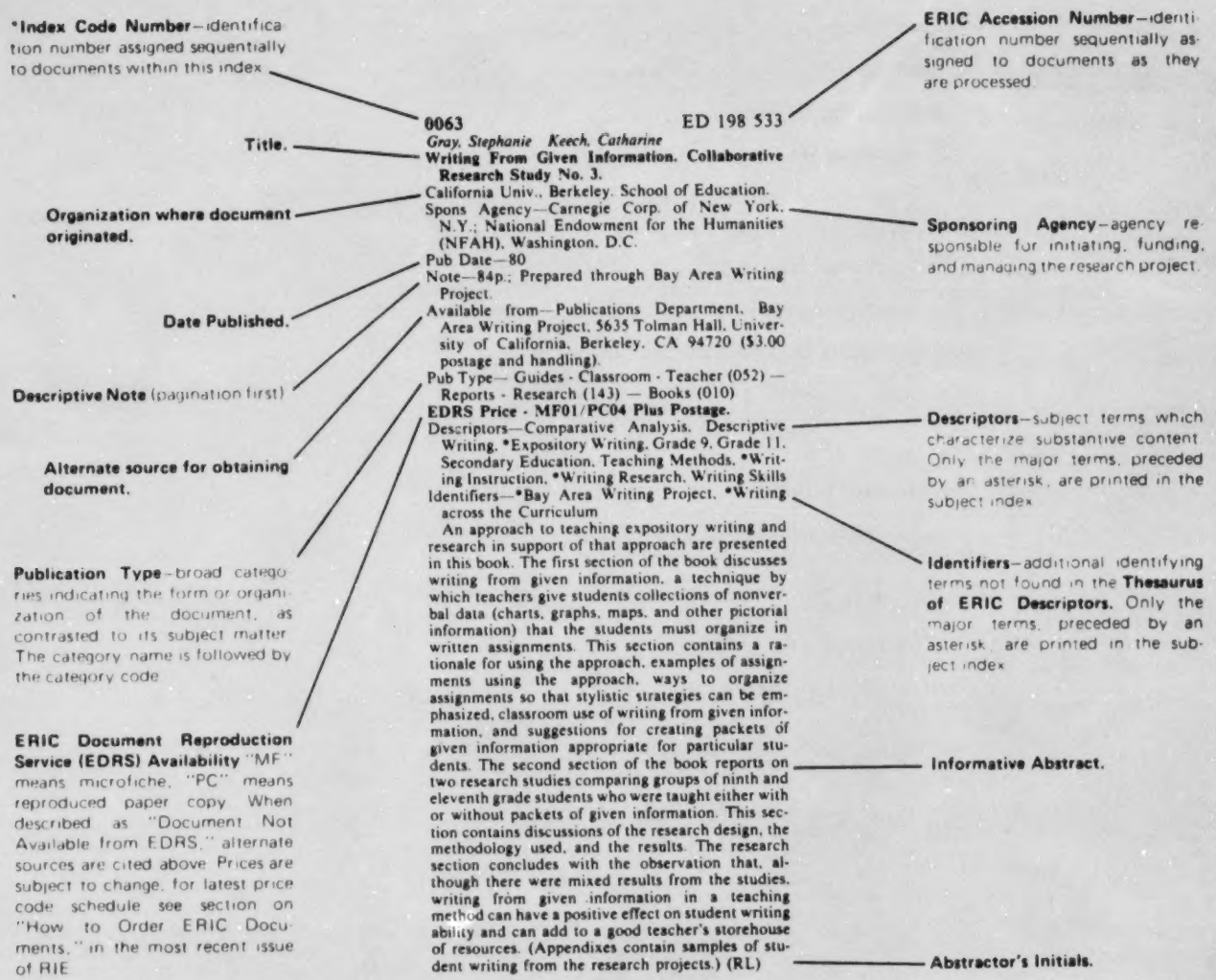
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Identifiers—*Bay Area Writing Project, *Writing across the Curriculum
Identifiers—additional identifying terms not found in the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors. Only the major terms, preceded by an asterisk, are printed in the subject index.
An approach to teaching expository writing and research in support of that approach are presented in this book. The first section of the book discusses writing from given information, a technique by which teachers give students collections of nonverbal data (charts, graphs, maps, and other pictorial information) that the students must organize in written assignments. This section contains a rationale for using the approach, examples of assignments using the approach, ways to organize assignments so that stylistic strategies can be emphasized, classroom use of writing from given information, and suggestions for creating packets of given information appropriate for particular students. The second section of the book reports on two research studies comparing groups of ninth and eleventh grade students who were taught either with or without packets of given information. This section contains discussions of the research design, the methodology used, and the results. The research section concludes with the observation that, although there were mixed results from the studies, writing from given information in a teaching method can have a positive effect on student writing ability and can add to a good teacher's storehouse of resources. (Appendixes contain samples of student writing from the research projects.) (RL)
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APPENDIX J

RESOURCE: REFERENCES FOR CREATIVE WRITING

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APPENDIX K

ARTICLES THAT STIMULATE SMALL GROUP INTERACTION AND GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- "MAKING THE PEN MIGHTIER"
- "DON'T TEACH RULES, TEACH WRITING"
- "WHY WRITE"

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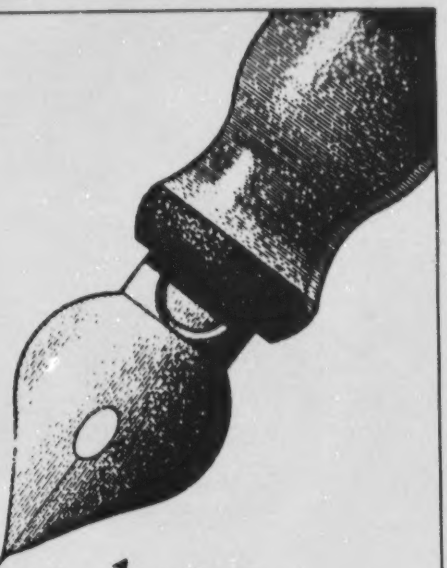


Making the Pen Mightier

by Barry K. Beyer

Mr. Beyer exposes four myths that undermine efforts to improve writing and writing instruction in U.S. schools. He advocates teaching students to use writing as a powerful tool for learning in all disciplines.

Despite the heroic efforts of writing specialists over the past several years to improve the teaching of writing in U.S. schools, we still seem rather far from achieving this laudable goal. There are at least two reasons for this lack of significant progress. First, we have failed to apply effectively to the teaching of writing what we know about the teaching of skills in general. And second, we have failed to use writing as the learning tool it could become in our classrooms.

I believe we must do three things if we hope to improve students' writing significantly. First, we must clear away some of the spurious suppositions about writing that, by our honoring them, have achieved the status of myths but that actually impede worthwhile efforts to improve the teaching of writing. Second, we must work to change some common teacher attitudes that frequently inhibit effective teaching of writing. Third, we must inject instruction in writing into *all* disciplines and *use* writing in *all* classrooms as the powerful tool it can be for learning subject matter.

BARRY K. BEYER (George Mason University Chapter) is a professor of education at George Mason University, Fairfax, Va. *©1982, Barry K. Beyer.*

Four Myths About Writing

There are four common claims about writing that I believe are largely mythical. Unfortunately, these myths are so widely accepted that they seriously undermine efforts to improve writing in U.S. schools. Disregarding them will free us to teach writing in ways that can greatly improve students' writing skills as well as their learning in the content areas.

Myth #1. Writing is the exclusive business of English/language arts teachers. Not true! We cannot improve either the teaching of writing or students' performance if we isolate these activities from the larger educational context in which purposeful communication occurs. Teaching writing for 40 to 50 minutes per week in English classes, where students generally write on topics far removed from the substantive goals of learning, can have relatively little impact, given the 1,200 to 1,400 minutes per week that these same students spend in school learning other subject matter. English teachers can supply neither the time nor a sufficient variety of appropriate writing contexts to carry the full burden of teaching writing.

Furthermore, we delude ourselves if we think that much of what English teachers introduce in writing instruction is carried over into other classrooms. Students do not readily transfer skills from one subject area to another on their own, partly because skills are often tied closely to the context, the content, and the language in which they are first learned. Moreover, teachers of other subjects are often uninformed about the kinds of writing instruction that English teachers provide and thus cannot reinforce them. Nor do teachers across the curriculum share a common instructional language; thus students often find teachers of the various disciplines using dissimilar words to talk about the same skill or concept. And few school curricula provide for explicit reinforcement across subject areas of skills or concepts introduced in a specific discipline.

We must extend writing instruction into the entire school, where it belongs. Without direct, informed, systematic instruction in writing by teachers of other subjects, the efforts of English teachers to introduce or sharpen writing skills usually fail to produce proficiency for want of sufficient reinforcement, practice, and extension.

Myth #2. Students write best when they write about a subject over which they have control. This claim might be true to the extent that our primary concerns are form and style (or elegance of expression). But this claim is quite untrue with regard to

Writing involves establishing relationships, making generalizations, thinking analytically.

edge, as well as facility in the writing process itself.

As I have already noted, writing involves establishing relationships and making generalizations. Writing requires analytical thinking — from drawing inferences and making assertions to separating relevant from irrelevant data and identifying patterns. Thus instruction in writing helps students to achieve goals that are central to most subject-matter courses.

But many subject-matter teachers feel that they are not trained to teach writing and should not be expected to do so. To some degree, these teachers are correct. Few K-12 teachers have ever received formal training in how to teach writing, and even fewer have had successful writing experiences themselves. This includes English teachers — many of whom, especially in secondary schools, see themselves primarily as teachers of literature. But numerous inservice training programs now exist to remedy this deficiency. Journal articles and books on the teaching of writing are increasingly available. And some school systems have writing specialists to help other teachers develop the requisite knowledge and skills. Using such resources, most teachers can learn to teach writing effectively.

Negative teacher attitudes toward the teaching of writing are often exacerbated by administrators and writing specialists, who bombard the teachers with platitudes and theory (ignoring the practical altogether) or bombard them with teaching techniques (without providing a reasonable framework within which to apply these techniques or even criteria for selecting the most potentially productive ones). Both approaches turn off already skeptical teachers. What subject-matter teachers need in order to launch writing programs are a few workable, content-related ways to provide instruction in writing.

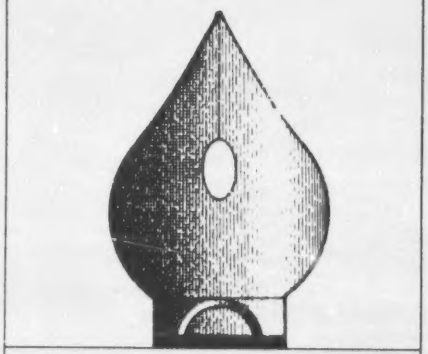
In dealing with teachers of other disciplines, writing specialists tend to use ill-defined but highly technical terms — "developed organizing idea," "slotting," "structural feedback guides" — that most of the uninitiated simply do not understand. Of course, this violates a basic rule of writing: acknowledging one's audience. To be most effective, writing specialists must communicate in the teachers' language, using examples from the teachers' courses and experiences.

Moreover, many suggestions that writing specialists offer appear to require too much preparation time or too much class time. Few teachers wish to entertain the thought of any assignment that will produce another 150 papers to grade. In making suggestions for teaching writing, specialists must address the issue of time and prove that it is not really an issue; they must show teachers that feedback on student writing does *not* mean grading and that students themselves can provide most of this feedback.

Finally, writing specialists too often give the impression that they are the only ones who know how to teach writing skills — when in fact many social studies, science, and other subject-matter teachers have been teaching these same skills (albeit under different labels and in different formats) for years. It does little good to alienate one's audience by appearing holier-than-thou. Giving classroom teachers credit for their achievements and building on what they already do well might make them more receptive to suggestions for teaching writing in their classes. Let me present five such suggestions.

1. Teachers themselves must write. Frequently. When teachers ask students to write, they should write too. When teachers have students submit their writing to peer evaluation, they should also submit their own writing to student evaluators. By doing these things, teachers show students that they value writing; they may also find that these activities improve their own writing abilities and their knowledge of how to teach writing. At the very least, teachers will become more sensitive to the problems their students face when they write; teachers may even discover that certain assignments cause or aggravate these difficulties. Meanwhile, professional organizations and Parent/Teacher Associations ought to conduct writing contests for subject-matter and English teachers, just as they already do for students. One reason students don't write often or well is that their teachers don't write often or well. Such contests, open to (required of?) teachers, might stimulate the interest and practice that teachers need to upgrade the quality of instruction in writing — or disabuse us once and for all of the notion that writing contests have educational value.

2. All teachers in a school should use the same basic stages of the writing process (prewriting, writing, and revision) as points of instructional intervention. They should also agree on common terminology to describe the writing skills and techniques they seek to reinforce in their own subject areas.

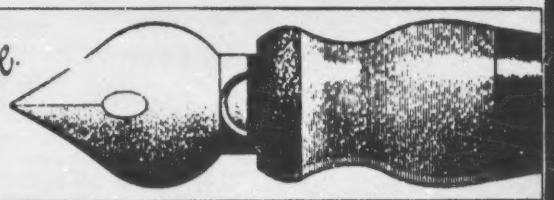


3. Writing specialists should share with other teachers a few well-developed instructional approaches, rather than engaging in overkill at the first inservice training session. Subject-matter teachers will benefit most from mastering a few workable ways to help students generate assertions or "organizing ideas." They will benefit most from knowing how students can provide or secure the feedback essential to genuine (not merely cosmetic) revision of a first draft. They will benefit most from knowing how to help students revise a statement to make it better accomplish its goals. They need, in other words, a *few* effective ways to help students develop the key skills of writing.

4. Faculties should build developmental, schoolwide writing programs that use what is known about the writing process to improve students' writing and their subject-matter learning across the curriculum. Such programs should avoid overloading students with writing assignments, just as they should avoid overloading teachers with the management problems that frequent writing assignments entail. Schoolwide writing programs must focus on articulating sequenced writing tasks that move in form from narration to description, persuasion, and evaluation; that move in length from single to many paragraphs; that move in focus from the individual to other people and then to issues and principles; and that move in content from personal experience to concrete events and, finally, to abstractions. In higher grades such developmental writing curricula should also systematically reinforce and extend skills that have been introduced earlier.

In launching a schoolwide writing program, it is probably unwise to pair English

Overemphasizing the mechanics of writing leads too often to form without substance.



the process and substance of writing. It is *not* necessary for students to know everything that they want to say about a subject before they begin to write about it.

Indeed, students can write to *discover* what they know, what they wish to say, and how they wish to say it. In addition, they can write to learn something new. In the act of writing, authors discover or invent insights, feelings, and knowledge that they did not comprehend before they started to write. They know more about their topics when they have finished their writing than when they started it.

Moreover, the tendency of many writing teachers to assign students to write almost exclusively about themselves is, I believe, dysfunctional. This practice stems from the highly questionable assumption that students know a lot about themselves. If there is one thing many youngsters *don't* know much about, it is themselves. Nor do all youngsters find writing about themselves a safe or satisfying task.

Furthermore, the general goals of schooling go beyond egocentrism to an awareness of society as a whole. More specifically, educational objectives include the learning of certain facts, concepts, skills, and attitudes. Writing almost solely about oneself may actually inhibit the realization of many of these goals and objectives. Students must write about broader topics if they are to grow intellectually as effective, knowledgeable citizens and as social beings.

Myth #3. Writing is a product. Again, this claim is only partially true at best. As rhetoricians conceptualize it, writing is a process that calls for establishing relationships, making inferences and assertions, and asking questions. It includes mental activities that begin long before writers put pens to paper and that continue even after they have finished drafting their ideas. Thus the product of the writing process is much more than a simple statement or opinion. It is a record of the writer's thinking.

When we conceive of writing as simply a product, we restrict our teaching of writing primarily to grammar, spelling, and style. Although important, these are merely the window dressing for ideas. We truly teach writing only when we focus on the process of generating, organizing, developing, and refining ideas. Overemphasizing the mechanics of writing leads too often to hollow prose, to communication without content, to form without substance.

Finally, when we conceive of writing as primarily a product, we drastically limit its potential as a tool for learning. Students can write *before* they know everything that they want to say, and they can rewrite their initial drafts as a way of processing information to invent new knowledge. If teachers genuinely wish to help students learn how to write, they must focus at least as much on how students produce the content of their papers as on the style of the products that emerge from this process.

Myth #4. Having students write term papers teaches writing. On the contrary. Term papers, as they are conventionally taught, are torture, both for teachers who have to grade them and for students who have to write them. Unless teachers provide direct instruction during the prewriting and composing stages, term papers serve as little more than tests. And unless the young authors receive detailed feedback from peers and from teachers and then use this feedback to revise their successive drafts, such term papers teach them little that is constructive about how to write. To ban term papers as they are conventionally taught might well be a major educational advance as well as an unparalleled act of mercy.

Other notions about writing also exist that, when honored in practice, hinder the teaching and learning of writing in our schools. Until we challenge the validity of these notions and acknowledge them as myths, our quest to improve student writing will continue to meet with limited success.

Teacher Attitudes

Administrative fiat will not convince teachers outside of the English department to teach their students to write. The infusion of such instruction throughout the curriculum requires a school environment characterized by cooperation, by sharing of common educational goals, and by mutual respect among all faculty members — regardless of specialty.

To create such an environment, writing specialists must acknowledge and accommodate the attitudes of subject-matter teachers that inhibit them from teaching writing in their classrooms. First, many subject-matter teachers feel compelled to "cover" content — so much so, in fact, that they see themselves as having little or no time for teaching writing. But this attitude ignores the implications that "covering" has for learning. The verb *to cover* sometimes means "to take in and hide from view," and that is exactly what most teachers do when they cover a topic. They move so quickly through the material that they lose their students in a fog of unrelated facts.

The real purpose of teaching should be to *uncover* — to make content intelligible to students. And writing is a very useful tool for helping students to sift through information to uncover its meaning, because writing is essentially a process of establishing relationships. Writing involves finding or creating links among disparate pieces of data and then articulating those links. Thus, by teaching writing in their classrooms, subject-matter teachers can increase their students' knowledge of course content while improving their writing skills.

Paradoxically, many of the same subject-matter teachers who claim they haven't time to teach writing actually do make their students write frequently — to answer essay questions at the ends of chapters, to complete worksheets, to prepare term papers, and to complete unit and final exams. Unfortunately, these writing activities serve primarily testing — not learning — functions, since they are preceded by little or no direct instruction on how to write. Subject-matter teachers need not require students to do more writing than they currently assign; they need only alter the method and timing of these assignments, in order to provide the kind of instruction and reinforcement that will improve both students' writing and their mastery of course content.

Many subject-matter teachers — even English teachers — view writing as peripheral to the goals of schooling and their own course goals, however. They see writing skills as relatively unimportant in this electronic age. What they fail to see is that instruction in writing aims at developing clearer thinking and increased knowl-

Writing should be integrated with subject matter and serve goals related to this subject matter.

teachers with subject-matter teachers. Too often, the English teachers end up correcting the grammar and spelling in students' papers, while the subject-matter teachers concern themselves with factual adequacy and accuracy. No one works on the writing process, although this ought to be the primary goal. Such practice demeans English teachers and absolves subject-matter teachers from becoming proficient in the writing skills they want their students to master; it also ignores the intimate interaction in writing between content and the process of communication.

5. Writing should be integrated with subject matter and serve goals related to this subject matter. Teachers of disciplines other than English should be helped to realize that, by attending to writing, they are helping their students learn to think more logically, communicate more effectively, and become more knowledgeable about the subjects they are studying.

Using Writing to Learn

Writing can be an effective tool for learning subject matter. Through writing, students can learn more about their topics, as well as about themselves and the audiences they address. Writing is a good way to learn facts, to conceptualize, to clarify thinking, and to hone cognitive skills — goals that most teachers share, regardless of discipline. We are not likely to get far by treating the improvement of students' writing as an end in itself.

Students can use writing in at least three ways to enhance their learning of subject matter. They can write to motivate learning: to develop purposes for reading, hypotheses for experimentation, and so on. They can write to conceptualize. And they can write to develop empathy with other points of view. Let me explain each of these uses.

First, students can use writing to motivate their study of a topic. For example, they can develop a purpose for reading a textbook assignment by first skimming the chapter, listing bits of information that they find interesting, and then inferring a way in which these bits are related. Next, they can write a paragraph stating and explaining the relationship they have inferred. Then they can read the same chapter carefully to test the accuracy of this inferred relationship. In other words, what they have written serves as a hypothesis to be tested by further reading. Moreover, when they have completed this further reading, they can revise their initial statements to take into account new insights. Used in this way, writing can motivate and shape new learning.

Second, students can write at increasingly more sophisticated conceptual levels about a specific topic. For example, they can write first to describe several different examples of something, then to compare the examples in order to extract basic similarities, and finally to explain the similarities (or differences) they note. In later writing, students can generalize about the fundamental themes, principles, or issues exemplified by these examples. They can also apply their generalizations to new examples, in order to evaluate the accuracy of their insights and to understand the new examples. By writing about a topic at different conceptual levels, students can invent generalizations and concepts that lead to new knowledge. This is a basic goal of instruction in all subjects.

Third, students can write to develop, to articulate, and to analyze their feelings about issues, people, and topics that they encounter in their courses. By writing about a person or problem from different points of view, students can develop empathy with the groups or individuals involved; they can also develop new insights into human character or into the nature of a problem and its causes. By writing first from the point of view of an individual involved in a particular problem, then from the point of view of a group or organization involved in that problem, and then from the point of view of the issues at stake, students can develop increasingly broader societal perspectives and increasingly more principled ways of thinking.

Thus writing can serve subject-matter goals in many ways other than as a method of testing. Students can write to learn new information, to develop concepts and generalizations, to refine their thinking, and to articulate, clarify, and evaluate feelings and values. And, when students engage in such writing, teachers will have opportunities to provide the instruction that will reinforce writing skills and enhance writing quality.

A faculty committee once complained that freshman writing was characterized by "immature thought" and that it was "miserably spelled, wretchedly expressed, and set down in slovenly hand." That was in 1894 — at Harvard. The situation the committee members described is still with us at every level of the educational system. And it promises to remain with us until we take action.

I do not claim that the suggestions I have made are all that is necessary to improve writing in our schools. Such efforts alone will not make the pen mightier than many of the other tools we use in teaching, learning, and communicating. But by following these and similar suggestions we can hope, quite reasonably, to make the pen mightier than — at least — the shovel. □

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OPINION AND COMMENTARY

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Don't teach rules, teach writing

By Robert Anderson

"Why don't high school teachers teach these kids how to write? I've never seen so many bad writers in my tenure as a college teacher. What are they doing down there? Playing games with these people? Are they teaching writing at all?"

This college prof's lament is typical. He blames the high schools while the high schools blame the lower grades for students' lack of skills in writing. Presumably the buck stops at the first grade. No one seems to be able to handle this problem, and as a result most students are cheated out of proper direction in writing.

English teachers are only giving lip service to the teaching of writing. They do a pretty good job of doling out those grammar and syntax rules year after year; but these rules have very little bearing on teaching writing. Recent studies indicate that the repetitious teaching of rules even has a harmful effect on a student's writing.

A rule, you see, only becomes important to students as they are actually applying it. And it is at this time that teachers can best help a student. They can point out the rule in the student's writing and explain it as a useful tool.

This is called individualized teaching, and it is the best way to teach writing. One on one. To this the anguished cries go up, "But I have too many students to do that." Bosh! What they are really saying is, "It's easier to work with a group than it is with 30 individuals." Teachers panic when they think of the other 29 kids in the room who aren't being lectured to. "What do I do with them?" they ask.

Have them write, naturally. My point is teachers on any level can help students greatly in their writing if they do it on a one-to-one basis. Individualization isn't a panacea, but it might begin the cure.

A second thing English teachers must do to change their styles is stop lecturing in front of the room. Or, perhaps, the teacher could lecture for about five periods; that's probably all the time needed to say everything worthwhile about writing before a student begins writing. Then students write. Teachers edit and teachers consult. All period long there's a student at the teacher's desk. Kids love this; not only do they learn about their unique problems but it's the first time they've ever talked to a teacher, one on one, when they weren't getting it in the neck. The writing teacher should be an editor and consultant, not a lecturer.

Another great change must take place in the English classroom before students learn to write. They must throw out all the traditional garbage that clutters up the writing class: literature, speech, using the telephone, role playing, human relations, Scrabble games, and other activities that take time away from teaching writing. Time is important.

James Conant said in his "American High School Today" that "the time devoted to English composition during the four years should occupy about half the total time devoted to the study of English."

As a matter of fact, compared to the early '60s when we were quite comfortable with teaching writing, the amount of writing done in the classroom has now been halved. Not only are we disregarding Conant's advice but we are making conditions worse.

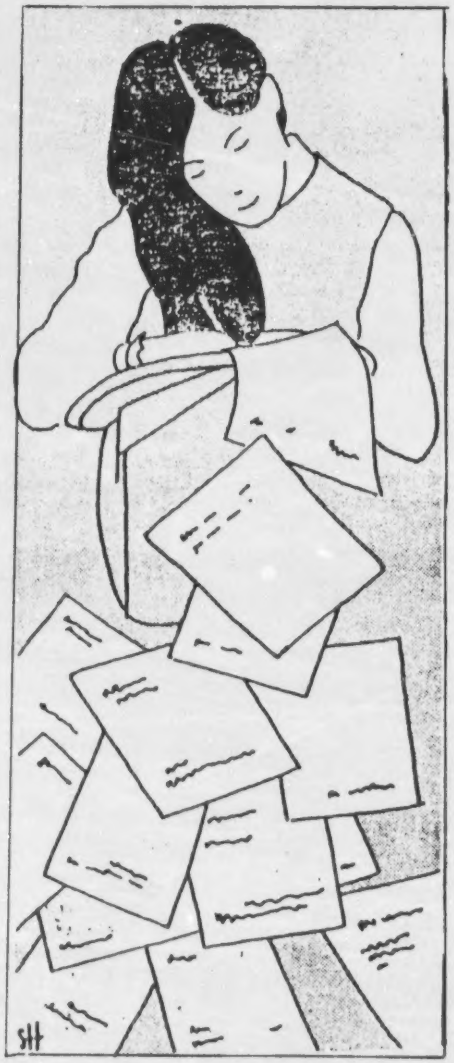
Conant went on to say, "Those students who do not obtain a grade on the eleventh grade composition test commensurate with their ability as measured by an aptitude test should be required to take a special course in English composition in the twelfth grade." Practically no high schools do this.

Because most English teachers know so little about the writing process since they themselves don't write, and because they never have taken a course in how to teach writing, it is unthinkable that they would spend two years teaching it in high school. Rare is the school that spends one uninterrupted year on writing.

Writing is usually a hit-or-miss assignment sandwiched in with the study of literature. The exceptions, of course, are the writing electives that only a handful of students take for one semester, or the mandatory one-semester writing class everyone is required to take.

The problem will be corrected only when those in charge of curriculum development understand it. English teachers themselves could be instrumental in making the change if they recognize the problem and quit avoiding it. In the meantime a million students will be cheated.

Robert Anderson, currently teaching at Daytona Beach Community College in Florida, has spent 22 years teaching English in secondary schools in various states.



WHY WRITE

Before we engage in an activity, it's useful to know the why of doing it.

When writing was the prime means of communication, it was seen as a valuable skill to possess. Indeed, the ability to write was so valuable that, for a time, it remained the prerogative of an elite few.

Gradually, however, the necessity for writing, along with other learned abilities, became significant to the masses and public education was inaugerated, instituted, even entrenched.

Composition like reading and math was for awhile a cornerstone of most curriculums. Pencils, pens, slates and inkwells flourished -- writing and communication were synonymous.

Fortunately, and sometimes unfortunately, change is enevitable. In this case, as alternative means of communication were developed and prospered,the "art of writing," while not lost, was frequently misplaced.

Telephones, Talking Pictures, Radio and Television moved into the spotlight. Writing, no longer the most common means of communication, was pushed into the shadows.

But fortunately, and sometimes unfortunately, change is inevitable. Today writing is moving out of the shadows and back into focus. Once again it is being acknowledged as a valuable communication tool, but, more importantly, it's receiving overdue attention as a very real learning tool.

When questioning the need to imprint a broader writing program, consider some of the following notions.

- Writing Organizes Our Picture of Reality

  All of us continually receive information, sensations and impressions. Sometimes by writing, we can analyze, classify and organize this input. Writing is, in fact, a means to thinking.

- Writing May Contribute to Learning in Mathematics

  Doing word problems stymies many children and adults. When children, through writing, have an opportunity to create word problems, they gain insight into the process which may eventually clarify the reading of problems.

- Writing Can Strengthen Self-Concept

  When children are able to see their own writing used by others, their sense of importance and worth may be heightened.

- Personality Development is Tied to Language Development

  Language and man are in continual interaction; change the man in some way and you change the language he uses; change the language he uses and you change the man.

- Reading and Writing Are Matters of Survival

  They efficiently transmit history and culture. They allow us to influence others. They provide us with feedback. They are valuable professional tools but, more importantly, they are contributors to what we become as individual human beings.

Written by: Billie Chambers
EIC - South

Based on the work of: Donald Graves

APPENDIX L

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS: "HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A BETTER WRITER"

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Things to Do at Home

1. Build a climate of words at home. Go places and see things with your child, then talk about what has been seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched. The basis of good writing is good talk, and younger children especially grow into stronger control of language with loving adults particularly parents--share experiences and rich talk about those experiences.

2. Let children see you write often. You're both a model and a teacher. If children never see adults write, they gain an impression that writing occurs only at school. What you do is as important as what you say. Have children see you writing notes to friends, letters to business firms, perhaps stories to share with the children. From time to time, read aloud what you have written and ask the children their opinion of what you've said. If it's not perfect, so much the better. Making changes in what you write confirms for the child that revision is a natural part of writing, which it is.

3. Be as helpful as you can in helping children write. Talk through their ideas with them; help them discover what they want to say. When they ask for help with spelling, punctuation, and usage, supply that help. Your most effective role is not as a critic but as a helper. Rejoice in effort, delight in ideas, and resist the temptation to be critical.

4. Provide a suitable place for children to write. A quiet corner is best, the child's own place, if possible. If not, any flat surface with elbow room, a comfortable chair, and a good light will do.

5. Give, and encourage others to give the child gifts associated with writing.

   - pens of several kinds
   - pencils of appropriate size and hardness
   - a desk lamp
   - pads of paper, stationery and envelopes, even stamps
   - a booklet for a diary or daily journal. (Make sure that the booklet is the child's private property; when children want to share, they will.)
   - a dictionary appropriate to the child's age and needs. Most dictionary use is for checking spelling, but a good dictionary contains fascinating information on word origins, synonyms, pronunciation, and so forth.
   - a thesaurus for older children. This will help in the search for the "right" word.
   - a typewriter, even a battered portable will do, allowing for occasional public messages, like neighborhood newspapers, play scripts.

- erasers or "white-out" liquid for correcting errors that the child wants to repair without rewriting.

6. Encourage (but do not demand) frequent writing. Be patient with reluctance to write. "I have nothing to say" is a perfect excuse. Recognize that the desire to write is a sometime thing. There will be times when a child "burns" to write, others when the need is cool. But frequency of writing is important to develop the habit of writing.

7. Praise the child's efforts at writing. Forget what happened to you in school, and resist the tendency to focus on errors of spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical parts of writing. Emphasize the child's successes. For every error the child makes, there are dozens of things he or she has done well.

8. Share letters from friends and relatives. Treat such letters as special events. Urge relatives and friends to write notes and letters to the child, no matter how brief. Writing is especially rewarding when the child gets a response. When thank you notes are in order, after a holiday especially, sit with the child and write your own notes at the same time. Writing ten letters (for ten gifts) is a heavy burden for the child: space the work and be supportive.

9. Encourage the child to write away for information, free samples, travel brochures. For a great many suggestions about where to write and how to write, purchase a copy of the helpful U.S. Postal Service booklet, All About Letters (available from NCTE @ $1.50 per copy).

10. Be alert to occasions when the child can be involved in writing. For example, helping with grocery lists; adding notes at the end of parents' letters; sending holiday and birthday cards; taking down telephone messages; writing notes to friends; helping plan trips by writing for information; drafting notes to school for parental signature; writing notes to letter carriers and other service persons; preparing invitations to family get-togethers.

    Writing for real purposes is rewarding, and the daily activities of families present many opportunities for purposeful writing. Involving your child may take some coaxing, but it will be worth your patient effort.

Things to Do for School Writing Programs

1. Ask to see the child's writing, either the writing brought home or the writing kept in folders at school. Encourage the use of writing folders, both at home and at school. Most writing should be kept, not thrown away. Folders are important means for helping both teachers and children see progress in writing skill.

2. Be affirmative about the child's efforts in school writing. Recognize that for every error a child makes, he or she will do many things right. Applaud the good things you see. The willingness to write is fragile. Your optimistic attitude toward the child's efforts is vital to strengthening the writing habit.

3. Be primarily interested in the content, not the mechanics of expression. It's easy for many adults to spot misspellings, faulty word usage, and shaky punctuation. Perfection in these escapes most adults, so don't demand it of children. Sometimes teachers--for these same reasons--will mark only a few mechanical errors, leaving others for another time. What matters most in writing is words, sentences, and ideas. Perfection in mechanics develops slowly. Be patient.

4. Find out if children are given writing instruction and practice in writing on a regular basis. Daily writing is the ideal; once a week is not often enough.

5. Ask if every teacher is involved in helping youngsters write better. Worksheets, blank-filling exercises, multiple choice tests, and similar materials are sometimes used to avoid having children write. If children and youth are not being asked to write sentences and paragraphs about science, history, geography, and the other school subjects they are not being helped to become better writers. All teachers have responsibility to help children improve their writing skills.

6. See if youngsters are being asked to write in a variety of forms (letters, essays, stories, etc.) for a variety of purposes (to inform, persuade, describe, etc.) and for a variety of audiences (other students, teachers, friends, strangers, relatives, business firms). Each form, purpose, and audience demands differences of style, tone, approach, and choice of words. A wide variety of writing experiences is critical to developing effective writing.

7. Check to see if there is continuing contact with the imaginative writing of skilled authors. While it's true we learn to write by writing, we also learn to write by reading. The works of talented authors should be studied not only for ideas but also for the writing skills involved. Good literature is an essential part of any effective writing program.

8. Watch out for "the grammar trap." Some people may try to persuade you that a full understanding of English grammar is needed before students can express themselves well. Some knowledge of grammar is useful, but too much time spent on study of grammar steals time from the study of writing. Time is much better spent in writing and conferring with the teacher or other students about each attempt to communicate in writing.

9. Encourage administrators to see that teachers of writing have plenty of supplies-writing paper, teaching materials, duplicating and copying machines, dictionaries, books about writing, and classroom libraries of good books.

10. Work through your PTA and your school board to make writing a high priority. Learn about writing and the ways youngsters learn to write. Encourage publication of good student writing in school newspapers, literary journals, local newspapers and magazines. See that the high school's best writers are entered into the NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing Program or the Scholastic Writing Awards or other writing contests. Let everyone know that writing matters to you.

By becoming an active participant in your child's education as a writer, you will serve not only your child but other children and youth as well. You have an important role to play, and we encourage your involvement.

For additional copies of this brochure, send requests prepaid to the NCTE Order Department, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801. $4.50 per hundred. Parents and teachers are encouraged to make copies for use with local groups.

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APPENDIX M

AUTHOR'S QUIPS ON WRITING

MURRAY, D.M. Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery. Cooper, C.R. & Odell, L. (ed.) Research on composing. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978.

Appendix: Writers on Prevision, Vision, and Revision

EDWARD ALBEE: Writing has got to be an act of discovery...I write to find out what I'm thinking about.

W.H. AUDEN: Language is the mother, not the handmaiden, of thought; words will tell you things you never thought or felt before.

JAMES BALDWIN: You go into a book and you're in the dark, really. You go in with a certain fear and trembling. You know one thing. You know you will not be the same person when this voyage is over. But you don't know what's going to happen to you between getting on the boat and stepping off.

ROBERT BOLT: Writing a play is thinking, not thinking about thinking.

TRUMAN CAPOTE: If there is no mystery, for the artist, to solve inside of his art, then there's no point in it...for me, every act of art is the act of solving a mystery.

FRANK CONROY: Most often I come to an understanding of what I am writing about as I write it (like the lady who doesn't know what she thinks until she says it).

JOHN DOS PASSOS: Curiosity urges you on--the driving force.

ALAN DUGAN: When I'm successful, I find the poem will come out saying something that I didn't previously know, believe, or had intellectually agreed with.

ROBERT DUNCAN: If I write what you know, I bore you; If I write what I know, I bore myself, therefore I write what I don't know.

WILLIAM FAULKNER: It begins with a character, usually, and once he stands up on his feet and begins to move, all I do is trot along behind him with a paper and pencil trying to keep up long enough to put down what he says and does.

GABRIEL FIELDING: Writing to me is a voyage, an odyssey, a discovery, because I'm never certain of precisely what I will find.

E.M. FORSTER: How do I know what I think until I see what I say?

ROBERT FROST: For me the initial delight is in the surprise of remembering something I didn't know I knew...I have never started a poem yet whose end I knew. Writing a poem is discovering.

CHRISTOPHER FRY: My trouble is I'm the sort of writer who only finds out what he's getting at by the time he's got to the end of it.

RUMER GODDEN: Of course one never knows in draft if it's going to turn out, even with my age and experience.

JOANNE GREENBERG: Your writing is trying to tell you something. Just lend an ear.

GRAHAM GREENE: The novel is an unknown man and I have to find him...

NANCY HALE: Many an author will speak of writing, in his best work, more than he actually knows.

ROBERT HAYDEN: As you continue writing and rewriting, you begin to see possibilities you hadn't seen before. Writing a poem is always a process of discovery.

SHIRLEY HAZZARD: I think that one is constantly startled by the things that appears before you on the page when you're writing.

GEORGE V. HIGGINS: I have no idea what I'll say when I start a novel. I work fast so I can see how it will come out.

CECILIA HOLLAND: One of the reasons a writer writes, I think, is that his stories reveal so much he never thought he knew.

WILLIAM INGE: I don't start a novel or a play saying, "I'll write about such and such." I start with an idea and then find out what I'm writing about.

GALWAY KINNELL: I start off but I don't know where I'm going. I try this avenue and that avenue, that turns out to a dead end, this is a dead end, and so on. The search takes a long time and I have to back-track often.

STANLEY KUNITZ: For me the poem is always something to be discovered.

MARGARET LAURENCE: Each novel is a kind of voyage of discovery.

DENISE LEVERTOV: Writing poetry is a process of discovery...you can smell the poem before you see it...Like some animal.

C. DAY LEWIS: First, I do not sit down at my desk to put into verse something that is already clear in my mind. If it were clear in my mind, I should have no incentive or need to write about it...we do not write in order to be understood; we write in order to understand.

BERNARD MALAMUD: A writer has to surprise himself to be worth reading.

WILLIAM MATTHEWS: The easiest way for me to lose interest is to know too much of what I want to say before I begin.

MARY MCCARTHY: Every short story, at least for me, is a little act of discovery. A cluster of details presents itself to my scrutiny, like a mystery that I will understand in the course of writing or sometimes not fully until afterward...a story that you do not learn something from while you are writing it, that does not illuminate something for you, is dead, finished before you started it.

ARTHUR MILLER: I'm discovering it, making up my own story. I think at the typewriter.

HENRY MILLER: Writing, like life itself, is a voyage of discovery.

ALBERTO MORAVIA: One writes a novel in order to know why one writes it.

WRIGHT MORRIS: The language leads, and we continue to follow where it leads.

FLANNERY O'CONNOR: The only way, I think, to learn to write short stories is to write them, and then try to discover what you have done.

LAWRENCE OSGOOD: Writing is like exploring...as an explorer makes maps of the country he has explored, so a writer's works are maps of the country he has explored.

JULES RENARD: The impulse of the pen. Left alone, thought goes as it will. As it follows the pen, it loses its freedom. It wants to go one way, the pen another. It is like a blind man led astray by his cane, and what I came to write is no longer what I wished to write.

MESSAGE TO THE READER

It is hoped that this guide and reference handbook provides a beginning for you in adapting resources and suggestions for classroom use. As you implement these suggestions, new ideas will occur to you as well as ways you might like to modify these suggestions to make them work better for you.

If you discover an idea that works well, won't you let us hear from you? Perhaps a follow-up or expanded network publication could be developed around your input with you as a resource person.

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